# THE STORY OF OUR ARMY

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# STORY OF OUR ARMY

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# THE STORY OF OUR ARMY

## SECTION I.

### CHAPTER I.

#### EARLY BRITISH FIGHTING MEN.

IT would be a difficult and thankless, if not wholly unprofitable, task to attempt to define precisely in a work of this sort the origin of such a complex growth as the British Army. To do so would certainly involve the reader in a mass of obscure and often uninteresting details, and the writer in one or two lively controversies. For even the starting-point of our present regimental system is regarded as open to argument, some preferring to trace it to the conversion of "Monk's Regiment" into the Coldstream Guards in 1661, while others find the true germ in the "New Model" of 1645. For the purposes of this "Story" it will serve if we glide rather lightly over these and similar vexed questions, and seek to discover, if not the scientific origin of the British Army, at any rate some very early evidences of military organisation in that simple, strong old England which preceded the Battle of Hastings, and the epoch-making entry—*in* a military as well as dynastic sense—of the Normans into our national history.

To do this there is no necessity whatever to

go back to the invasion of Julius Cæsar, and the subsequent struggles between the Romans and the subjects of Cassivelaunus, Caractacus and Boadicea. Our Army, like our Constitution, owes little or nothing to those times, although here and there the zealous antiquarian may find military survivals of the Roman occupation. When, however, the real annals of England began, there rapidly came to the surface the military obligations naturally associated with the German tribal system to which even our elementary histories make allusion. Cassivelaunus may have been a very early commander of a confederated British army, and Caractacus and Boadicea may have been able to bring a certain number of war-chariots into the field, but there is nothing to show that they had the same claim as the English kings have to be associated with the Old Constitutional Force of England, the Militia, the records of which go back to eight or nine hundred years before our latter-day Regular Army sprang into existence.

There is absolutely no question that our modern Militia is lineally descended from the Old English institution known as the *Fyrd*, or Militia of the Shires, to which there are repeated references in the Chronicles. There was a Ship-Fyrd as well as a Land-Fyrd, and it is an interesting historical fact that, when William the Norman was threatening invasion, both Fyrds were called out, and the fleet cruised in the Channel while the land militia guarded the coasts, much as both might have to do a thousand long years later. Reverting to the Land-Fyrd, it should be understood that service

in this was part of the threefold obligation to which the tenure of land in England was subject by the earliest Common Law. The threefold obligation in question was known as the *trinoda necessitas*, and under it every holder of land had to contribute service in the field (Fyrd) and a share in the maintenance of bridges and fortifications. The Fyrd covered all ages between sixteen and sixty, and the service which could be demanded on account of any one emergency appears to have been limited to two months. The possession of five hides of land rendered the owner liable to thegn's service—usually as a mounted fighting man—and every five hides had to furnish a fighter of some sort.

For the benefit of the student and the antiquary it is convenient here to point out a little by-path which leads yet further back into history, and may indicate a very interesting connection between the Militia and the term "Hundred," as still used in some country districts, a well-known survival of it being the mythical "Chiltern Hundreds," for which members of the House of Commons apply on retirement. In the very early days of English history the Witenagemot, or Meeting of Wise Men, was merely the Council of War of the Folk-Moot or War Host. It was, as Green tells us, the gathering of those ealdormen who had brought the men in their villages to the field. The Host was formed by levies from the various districts of the tribe, the larger of which probably owed their name of "Hundreds" to the hundred warriors which each originally sent on active service.

The early history of the Fyrd is not inspiring, and against the Danes in particular it was anything but an efficient safeguard. In order to call it out the consent of the Witan was necessary, and when that was obtained the individual members of the National Council had to go back to their Shires and Hundreds, and considerable delay would ensue before anything like an effective concentration could be carried out. As Freeman remarks, the trouble of maintaining an army thus collected without pay and with no proper commissariat arrangements was serious even for a great and capable prince like Alfred. For a weak and unready one like Æthelred the difficulties were insurmountable, and the Danes triumphed accordingly.

The Danish Invasion introduces us to a new feature of military organisation. This first appears in the reign of Cnut, and in it historians find the germ of a standing army, while to the general reader it will doubtless suggest a pleasant analogy in the shape of the Household Brigade. The force in question was a body of soldiers formed from the crews of the forty Danish ships which were retained by Cnut when he sent back the greater part of his fleet in the second year of his reign. They were called the King's Thingamen or House-Carles, and in Cnut's time they were from three to six thousand strong. They received regular pay, were governed by an elaborate code of military regulations, and were subsequently reinforced by volunteers of all kinds and of all nations. The institution was continued by later kings, and must have attained consider-

able social, if not historical prominence. The records of Edward the Confessor include mention of several grants by the King to his House-Carles, and, on the whole, the latter seem to have behaved remarkably well. Under a bad king, no doubt, they were not very popular, but under a good one they appear to have conducted themselves quite as they should have done, even in the piping times of peace. When it came to fighting, as at Stamford Bridge and Hastings, there is no question that the House-Carles were a body of troops of whose gallantry and devotion any sovereign might well have been proud.

At the battle of Hastings the House-Carles appear to have worn helmets and coats of mail differing very little from those of the enemy, with which reproductions of the Bayeux tapestry have rendered even the schoolboy familiar. Their shields, too, were mostly of the same kite-shaped form, but a few were round, with a boldly projecting boss, like the shields of classical warfare. They carried javelins to hurl at the beginning of an action, and heavier weapons for combat at close quarters. Some retained the ancient broad-sword, but most carried the great long-handled axe, wielded with two hands, which was probably introduced by Cnut.

Thus, prior to the Norman Conquest, England was already familiar with two distinct and typical forms of military organisation, a little standing army in the shape of paid "regular" household troops, and a militia liable to compulsory service, and associated with the land. The House-Carles, so far as they went, appear to have been

thoroughly efficient and well-equipped, but the militia laboured under obvious disadvantages, not the least serious of which must have been the entire absence of any training except such as was acquired in actual warfare. At a later date the militiaman called out for service was expected to bring with him certain simple equipment and weapons, the possession of which was obligatory by law. But at the period immediately preceding the invasion of William the Norman the Fyrd was not taken very seriously, and the result of a levy was probably a rabble of rustics armed with rude agricultural implements, and only with difficulty brought together into any semblance of tactical organisation.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

WITHOUT following further these early developments of our military system, let us press on to that great landmark in our annals, the year 1066, when this island was threatened by two separate invasions, and Harold of England found himself forced to make extraordinary preparations against Harald Hardrada of Norway from the north and William the Norman in the south. The story of Harold of England's gallant effort to meet this "war on two fronts" is finely told in Freeman's great "History of the Norman Conquest." It brings out in strong relief the difficulties arising from the nature of the Fyrd to which the House-

Carles were an inadequate supplement. For the defence of the whole coast of Wessex and East Anglia Harold had to trust entirely to the Fyrd, and the task of keeping it together appears to have been almost hopeless. If there had been any fighting in prospect the difficulty might have been sensibly diminished, as the Fyrd was always ready for a battle, although when the battle was lost or won it invariably disbanded itself and went home. But to remain from May to September in a state of inaction, without the excitement of fighting or the attraction of plunder, was too much for the early British militia. After four months of watching, for the most part along the southern coast, the authority and influence of Harold no longer sufficed to keep the Fyrd to its coast. The army was disbanded, and the King retired sick at heart to London, there to learn that Harald of Norway had effected a landing, and had won a victory over the Angles and Northumbrians under Edwin and Morcar at Fulford, near York.

In strong fear lest William the Norman might profit by his absence to gain a footing in the south, Harold of England rapidly formed the grand plan of dashing northwards to meet and crush Harald Hardrada, and of subsequently returning swiftly to cope with the threatened Norman invasion. This notable project was, so far as the first portion was concerned, magnificently carried out. At the head of his House-Carles Harold sped northwards from London, gathering in auxiliary contingents of country-folk as he marched.

The battle of Stamford Bridge, at which Harold of England made short work of the Norwegian

invasion, needs only passing allusion. It was won, as Fortescue observes, mainly by the House-Carles, who were more than a match for the mixed levies of Harald Hardrada, more especially as the latter were somewhat demoralised by their recent easy victory at Fulford. Harald Hardrada himself was slain at Stamford Bridge, and Harold of England entered York and enjoyed, in the robust fashion of the times, a short-lived triumph.

For in the interval occupied by this brilliant little campaign his former fears as to the movements of William the Norman had been completely realised. After eight months of preparation, and a month of waiting for a favourable wind, William had crossed the sea, and at the end of September had landed at Pevensey in Sussex, and was ravaging the coast. Harold hastened southwards, and, after summoning such additional troops as were available to his banner, advanced to the coast, and made careful preparations for the coming decisive conquest.

A modern military critic has declared that Harold possessed no military genius. Judged by some up-to-date practical standards he may have been wanting, but there is something of true military genius in the rapid march from London to York, the utter smashing of the Norwegians at Stamford Bridge, the swift return to London, the assembly of fresh troops, and the cautious advance to meet an invasion, with which that of Tostig and Harald Hardrada cannot be seriously compared. For the army which William the Norman had brought with him consisted not only of the flower of Norman knighthood, but of Bretons,

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

Burgundians, and other trained warriors from every province of France, all carefully inspired with the belief that William was seeking his own at the hands of a perjured traitor. According to the chronicles the Norman host mustered 50,000 cavalry and 10,000 footmen.

Whatever may have been his tactical shortcomings, Harold of England knew better than to attack this highly superior enemy. Accordingly he entrenched himself on Senlac, a low spur of the Sussex downs near Hastings, having in rear of his position an extensive wood, and marshy ground on his right. On October 14, William, for whom a decisive engagement had become a necessity, for Harold's ships were blockading Pevensey and Hastings, and the English army at Senlac covered London, advanced to give battle. His first line was composed of archers, his second of heavily-mailed infantry, and behind these were arrayed in five divisions the Norman and French cavalry. Along Harold's front ran a trench dug for the purpose of checking a rapid cavalry advance, while each of the many wedge-shaped bands into which his force were divided was protected by a stout stockade. The most exposed part of the position seems to have been the left, and here were planted the Golden Dragon of Wessex and the Royal Standard, the figure of a warrior worked in gold thread and ornamented with precious stones. Here stood Harold himself, with his brothers Gvrth and Leofwine, and round them the House-Carles, mailed and wielding mighty axes. The light armed levies of the Fyrd completed the English force, which fought

entirely on foot, and under strict orders from Harold not to break their ranks.

So long as these orders were obeyed, success shone on the English arms. With desperate gallantry the Norman foot and horse pressed the English hard, only to be repulsed by the axes and javelins fiercely plied behind the stiff stockades. The Bretons endeavouring to fall on the English right flank became entangled in the marshy ground and broke in disorder, and temporary panic was created in the Norman ranks by a cry that William was slain. The Norman leader was, however, indefatigable and full of resource. At last, by feigning flight, he succeeded in drawing a part of the English army from its position. Then rapidly enveloping and destroying the pursuers, he made his way to the heart of the defence, at the same time bringing up his archers to rain arrows on the group of House-Carles standing at bay round the King. Here, as the sun went down, the royal Harold fell, smitten by an arrow in the eye, and, as night closed in, the fragments of the English army dissolved in flight. William lost no time in securing Romney and Dover, and then marching by Canterbury on London, whence, a little later, a deputation came forth, with Edgar the Ætheling at its head, to offer him the crown.

## CHAPTER III.

### KNIGHTHOOD AND CHIVALRY.

THE century and a half which followed the Norman Conquest cannot be regarded as an epoch of any

serious progressiveness, or of other significance from the military point of view. From a certain class of school history we are apt to derive the idea that at this period the country became saturated with feudalism of the pure continental type, in accord with which all land was held on a graded system of personal vassalage, involving military service, and a variety of other "aids" or contributions. But the truth seems to be that not only did a sort of feudalism exist in England before the Norman Conquest, as evidenced by the old system of thegnhood, but that William the Conqueror was far too shrewd to introduce in its entirety an institution which, in Continental Europe, had already done much to weaken the power and diminish the personal prosperity of the king. European feudalism had never, as a historian who has paid special attention to this subject says, sought to abolish kingship; but a king had little real power in a country the greater part of which was held by strong nobles, each with a little army of vassals of his own, and each exercising such dangerous rights as those of private judicature and private warfare. William was not the man to squander the fruits of his hard-won conquest in building up in England such a system as that.

Accordingly, what he did was to graft on the old English custom of thegnhood as much of Continental feudalism as served to secure him in the possession of what he had won, and at that point he prudently stopped. The earlier years of his reign were marked by violent national revolts, and in crushing these William resorted

to vast confiscations of territory. He was thus enabled to reward his Norman followers with manors, each one of which was granted on the condition of the holder's service at the king's call. This produced, apart from the great nobles, a second rank of land-holders, who owed and had sworn direct fealty, not to one of the leading barons, but to the king himself. Again, William set his face sternly against private warfare, and thus struck a blow at those inter-baronial struggles which in Germany and France had made it difficult, if not impossible, for contemporary kings to assert themselves.

The very modified form in which feudalism was introduced into England soon led to a rather lax interpretation of its laws. The Normans kept up, no doubt, the forms of feudal tenure with some degree of careful observance, and William and his successors were at pains to remind their knights, whenever necessary, of their vassalage, in respect more particularly of military service. But the English do not appear to have ever had feudalism thrust down their throats to the extent suggested by some of the text-books. As a matter of fact, it soon became customary, probably because it was convenient, to accept from vassals a money payment in lieu of that personal service upon which the rules of feudalism laid such stress. Instead of the man, his money was accepted; and it is from this system of providing shillings (solidi) wherewith to hire substitutes that the term "soldier" is derived.

Gradually we see this system of accepting a money payment in lieu of personal service ex-

tended until it embraced the knights themselves. Less than a hundred years after the Conquest we find Henry II., in 1159, when about to make war with the French King for the Duchy of Toulouse, waiving his right as Feudal Lord Paramount to call out all landowners for personal service, and levying a war-tax under the name of "scutage" instead. It is interesting to note that under this scutage the payment for a knight's fee was £3, the number of such fees established by the Conqueror being 60,000. The commutation in this case appears to have been compulsory, and, with the aid of Becket, scutage was successfully levied on Church as well as lay property.

An early result of the Norman Conquest, then, was the introduction into the country of large numbers of military mercenaries, many of them foreigners, who were distinct alike from the former House-Carles and the still surviving Fyrd; and it must be admitted that to these mercenaries many of the early military triumphs of England were unquestionably due. They do not appear to have been popular with either the people or the greater nobles, and in the latter portion of Magna Charta it was expressly stipulated that the King should send away his foreign "soldiers, crossbowmen and hirelings," which John promised to do—and did not do, as might have been expected from that perfidious parody of a king.

Reverting to Henry II., although in regard to the expedition to Toulouse he found scutage preferable to personal service, it was in his

reign that, later, we see a return to the good old Fyrd, the existence of which was formally re-asserted by the Assize of Arms in 1181. Prior to this the Fyrd had scarcely been in evidence throughout the twelfth century, although under various "Commissions of Array," which appear to have had much the same effect as a modern Proclamation for the Embodiment of the Militia, levies of men were made as occasion required, and sometimes without much regard to the strict legality of the proceeding.

It might be supposed that the Crusades would have given a vigorous impetus to the growth of military sentiment in England, but this seems hardly to have been the case, and certainly these curious operations have left singularly little trace upon our military history. They produced some very stirring episodes, such as, for example, the Siege of Acre, in which Richard I. displayed excellent tactical and engineering skill in charge of a mixed contingent, in circumstances remotely resembling those surrounding the recent international expedition to Pekin. Otherwise the Crusades are chiefly noteworthy for the prominence into which they brought the great religious military orders, such as the Knight Templars and the Knight Hospitallers, and, according to Fortescue, for the introduction into our army of military bands.

The Knight Templars were a very remarkable Order, and cultivated military science to an extent which in those days gave them a serious advantage apart from their wealth and political influence. They may be said to have carried to a point

of exaggeration the religious sentiment which underlay much of the higher military feeling of the time. Religion, coupled with a devotion to, and an anxiety to shine in the eyes of, the fair sex, had much to do with the chivalry of this period. The Knight Templars eliminated the latter factor, and laid greatly increased emphasis on the former, binding down all who sought to enter their Order by vows of almost monastic rigour. The Crusades brought into strong relief the good qualities of the Templar, and Christian supremacy in the Holy Land owed much to the genuine military accomplishments of these excellent soldiers. But, as their wealth and power increased, abuses crept into the Order, and in 1312 it came to an end. Some vividly interesting allusions to the Knight Templars are to be found in Scott's "Ivanhoe," in which, incidentally, a reference is made which happily illustrates Fortescue's contention as to the oriental origin of military bands. It will be remembered how the Templars under Conrad marched forth with their musicians playing a wild Saracenic air. The Knight Hospitallers were much longer lived as an Order than the Templars, and at a later date asserted themselves very remarkably, first as the Knights of Rhodes, and afterwards as the Knights of Malta.

Apart from the religious orders, the whole of what may be termed aristocratic England was, at this time, largely absorbed in the contemplation and practice of Chivalry. The exact military significance of this phase of thought it would be difficult to define and, indeed, the term chivalry

itself is a loose one. But it may be taken that to become a "belted knight" in compliance with the rules of chivalry, which accorded that distinction only to those who had attained a very high standard of behaviour and actual performance in the field, was the ambition of every well-born Englishman of this period. The alternative was a more or less clerkly career in con nection with one of the great monasteries. The rules of Chivalry were complicated and rigid to the last degree. Even those who were of unquestioned lineage had to win their spurs by most careful observance of a code which permitted little relaxation, and the accolade was almost invariably withheld until he who aspired to be dubbed a knight had satisfied very exacting critics as to his qualifications.

There is no question that chivalry exercised a very remarkable influence upon contemporary English thought. To some extent, no doubt, that influence was an ennobling one, since it fostered principles which could not fail to bring credit on those who consistently strove to put them into practice. Many indications of the high ideals inculcated by the severe code of knightly behaviour are apparent in the literature, and, indeed, in the history of the time. It could not but be to the enhanced vigour and beauty of the national character that matters of honour and lofty morality should be regarded as part and parcel of the existence of what Chaucer calls "a veray parfit gentil knyghte," and it is not difficult to understand that a goodly prominence was attained by those who brightly

maintained this high standard of gentlemanly behaviour. But there is a reverse side to the picture. It is much to be feared that there was a good deal of quixotry even in the more solid manifestations of English chivalry, and that too often the possessor of a proud and knightly name took a good deal more trouble to maintain the traditions of his ancestors by absurd and wholly uncalled-for feats of derring-do, than he did to acquire what might, even then, have been a much more useful reputation for true soldierliness. Still chivalry had this important advantage that it kept a very large proportion of the best blood and brains of England more or less absorbed in military studies and aspirations, and that circumstance alone must have been distinctly operative in assisting British supremacy on Continental battlefields.

There is another reason why chivalry cannot be regarded with very great seriousness, even as affecting this particular epoch, from the standpoint of British military progress. The real history of the British Army at this time was not wholly or even in greater part bound up in the capacity of one belted knight to poke another off his horse, nor in the fantastic notions which went to make up the code of honour prevalent at the period. The real military sinews of the nation lay not in the chivalrous prowess of those who acted more or less efficiently as leaders in the field, but in the rank and file who went cheerfully forth to war under conditions such as might well have deterred freemen who were not born fighters at heart. It is true that not only was

our army for foreign expeditions largely a stipendiary one at this time, but also that it consisted very considerably of foreign mercenaries, Brabanters, Poitevins, and all manner of hired soldiers, mere bravoes some of them, from the troubled parts of the Continent. But in all the early French wars there was a residuum of honest English stuff, and there is no question that to this was due much of the military success of the Plantagenets. In the next chapter will be given some account of that grand specimen of British fighting quality—the English Archer—but it is convenient here to emphasise the point alluded to above, namely, that the epoch was essentially one in which, from an historical standpoint, the rank and file loom larger than the leaders in the military hierarchy. Indeed, one cannot read the detailed accounts of the sieges and expeditions of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries without noting that the non-commissioned ranks of those days, if one may use the term of a time when commissions had not the official significance they have had for the last two hundred years, displayed many of the qualities and initiative which are aimed at in the training of the British soldier of to-day, but which, so far, we have only arrived at in sporadic instances. No doubt this was largely due to the circumstances in which the English soldier then fought, and especially to the comparative frequency with which he found himself more or less isolated, while his leader was possibly roaming the field in search of a knight with a bigger horse and a larger iron pot on his

head than he himself could boast. But, taking this into consideration, we must also remember that the British soldier of those times was for the most part of the very finest material and origin, that is to say, he came direct from the land, which has always given us, and always will give us, the best fighting men we possess. A splendid idea of the soldier of this description, with all his faults as well as his virtues, is given in Conan Doyle's stirring romance, "The White Company," in which the "Song of the Bow" is as fine a tribute to the lusty manhood and unclouded fighting spirit of the time as has ever fallen from the lips of any poet, classical or modern, who has taken the soldier and his weapons as his theme.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE ARCHER AND HIS COMRADES.

THERE is no doubt that in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries the institution of knighthood, to the discussion of which the last chapter was devoted, played a very prominent part in warfare. The knights with the men-at-arms, mounted and on foot, which they took with them into the field under a sort of contract with the king, constituted in some ways the most imposing feature of the average battle array of the period. For many purposes these formidable fighting men were of unquestioned value. The knights themselves, fired with military enthusiasm and always on the look-out to attain distinction by particular

deeds of daring, afforded a fine example to their own immediate following, although, as has already been noted, it is possible that their battle-leading was at times rendered defective by their selfish ambition to shine in single-handed combat. Closely associated with the knights were two sorts of cavalry, the mounted men-at-arms, cased from head to foot in plate armour, and the "Hobelers," or light cavalry, who about this time were much in evidence as a supplement to the knights and the heavier mounted troops. The heavy-armed infantry were distinct to some extent from these, but were often merged in them, inasmuch as it was the custom during a hard fight for the mounted men-at-arms to dismount and fight on foot. Given certain conditions of ground, a charge of mounted men-at-arms was generally most effective, while for downright solidity as a defensive force it would be difficult to conceive anything superior to a group of mailed infantry.

In addition to the above, there were usually connected with every army in the field a number of light-armed irregulars, carrying darts and knives, who were capable of inflicting considerable damage upon troops which happened to be thrown into temporary confusion by bad ground or the mischance of a battle. As will be seen later, the English Army derived the use of these auxiliaries largely from its experiences in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. But, as a matter of fact, light-armed irregulars were common to most species of contemporary warfare.

Apart from knights, men-at-arms, and light-armed troops, England possessed in her Archers

a force of altogether exceptional value. These were the "bowmen the yeomen, the lads of dale and fell," of Conan Doyle's stirring lyric, and, as has already been suggested, their association with the land gave them a particular significance. Of the Yeomanry of England there are countless descriptions in our literature, but none perhaps more to the point in a military sense than the allusions contained in Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" and Scott's drama of "Halidon Hill." It is easy from Chaucer's striking portrait of the nut-headed, brown-visaged yeoman to picture him, and the words in which Scott points out how closely the yeomanry were wedded to the soil may well be reproduced in their entirety here :—

"These gallant yeomen,
England's peculiar and appropriate sons,
Known in no other land. Each boasts his hearth
And field as free as the last lord his barony,
Owing subjection to no human vassalage
Save to their king and law. Hence they are resolute,
Leading the van on every day of battle,
As men who know the blessings they defend.
. . . . . .
No other kingdom shows such worth and happiness
Veiled in such low estate."

Archery, of course, is not a plant of English growth. The use of the bow was known in the most remote ages, and we have many allusions to it in Scripture. It is quite possible that archery was originally imported from the East; but it does not seem to have obtained any great hold upon the Continent, although archers were brought over by William the Conqueror, and it was

largely due to their "high angle fire" that the battle of Hastings was won. In the two centuries succeeding the Norman Invasion, archery became part and parcel of English military training, and the bow rapidly grew to be the characteristic weapon of the English yeoman.

The training of the archer appears to have been conducted with admirable thoroughness, and it must have been due to this that results were obtained which in these days seem almost incredible. Even little boys were taught to bend a baby bow, and, as the youth grew older, the power of the weapon was increased until it attained the splendid proportions of the great war bow carried by the archers who fought in the French wars. This formidable weapon required peculiar skill and aptitude in its use, and mere muscular strength would have been of little avail in the successful practice of archery, with a war bow and war arrows such as men like Samkin Aylward of "The White Company" could use with ease. From the great war bow an arrow could be sped for no less than 400 yards; but, in order to accomplish this feat, the archer must have gone through a very special training. He must have been taught as Bishop Latimer, two hundred years later, said that he himself had been taught, how to "lay his body in the bow, and not to draw with mere strength of arm, as other nations do, but with strength of body."

The penetration as well as the range of the war arrow shot from the war bow was remarkable. Common armour was not proof against it, and, even in the case of coats of mail fashioned from

the finest Milan steel, there were joints through which the "long shaft, the strong shaft, barbed and trim, and true," readily found its way. Many a noble knight must have fallen through the drawing of a bow at a venture, just as Ahab did, in spite of his magnificent panoply. Indeed it is not too much to say that in this fact was largely bound up the decay of chivalry, since personal deeds of single-handed prowess naturally declined in frequency as the archer grew more dangerous, and the mailed knight became more and more liable to be toppled off his horse by the clothyard shaft of a man with whom he could not come in close quarters, and whom, in any case, he might have considered hardly worthy of a thrust from his great lance.

It is easy to see what a valuable adjunct to the fighting forces of those days a body of archers would be. It took some time even for a horseman to cover the distance represented by effective range of the bow, and in that interval he ran considerable risk of falling a victim to the rain of arrows which the skilful bowmen of the period were trained to keep up in the early stages of a battle. There is an obvious analogy between this and a frontal attack upon a position held by modern infantry, but the advantage in the case of the archers of those days was greatly accentuated by the fact that the attacking force had comparatively little means of replying to the fire of the defence. Indeed, at no period of our military history does the distinction between shock action as represented by the lumbering man-at-arms on a horse, and fire action as

represented by the archer, seem to have been more clearly drawn.

But the archer was not only dangerous at a distance. He was provided with means both of defence and offence for fighting at close quarters, and in this respect was hardly a less formidable antagonist than the man-at-arms, despite the mailed protection which the latter enjoyed. On his head he wore a cap of steel, and his stout jerkin could turn any ordinary sword stroke or spear thrust. Besides his bow he carried a sword, a short battle-axe, or the "brown bill," and was thus able to give an excellent account of himself, even when his arrows were spent, and the enemy had closed in upon him. At times he suffered heavily, for he was always liable to be overcome by a sudden charge like that which Bruce delivered at Bannockburn. The extent to which his services were used in the early stages of the fight, and his consequent pre-occupation, must have often rendered his position a perilous one; but, taking all this into account, the English archer was a very redoubtable fighting man, and on scores of battlefields his presence was a serious factor in the resulting victory.

It is convenient here to give passing attention to the pay of the archer, and of other classes of British soldiers at this period. It must be admitted that this, as a rule, was on an extremely liberal scale. The daily pay of an archer appears to have equalled in value the five shillings a day, the payment of which to the Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa has produced such lively discussion. Of course, it will be understood that

this was the active service rate, and, indeed, the scale is that which the Roll of Calais shows to have been paid to the forces under Edward III. in France. If the archer was liberally paid, the light horseman, who received an equivalent of fifteen shillings a day, must have been accounted in clover. A knight's pay equalled £2 a day in the value of modern money, his esquire receiving half that amount, and the pay of a baron was at the rate of what would now be nearly £1500 a year. This pay was generally issued in advance under contracts between the king and his nobles, and sub-contracts between the latter and the men-at-arms, the hobelers and archers.

Although most of the military service was voluntary, impressment was also resorted to, especially in order to obtain supplies of artificers, such as masons, smiths, tent-makers, and so forth. These, however, were always liberally paid, and, in addition to pay, all ranks had the further incentive of plunder, and a share in the ransom of wealthy captives.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE BEGINNING OF THE UNION.

FROM 1066 to 1400 the Norman and Angevin Kings, the latter better known as the Plantagenets, contrived to get through an immense amount of solid fighting, both abroad, in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and lastly in England itself. Of the campaigns of Crécy and Poitiers

some separate account will be given in the next chapter. The battles of Lewes and Evesham, although invested with immense historical importance by their association with the most important constitutional landmark in our annals, cannot be said to have much military significance, except in so far that they were early instances of that internecine strife which afterwards received such painful illustration in the wars of the Roses, and the struggles between the Stuarts and Parliament. But to the beginning of the Union, by the long drawn conflict between the Plantagenets, and the Irish, Scottish and Welsh nations, a many-sided importance is attached. It is not proposed in this little "Story" to go deeply into all the military points of interest in connection with these operations, but from the following brief allusions will be gathered some salient facts, tending to show clearly that our modern army owes much to the vigour with which the Plantagenets sought to include Ireland, Scotland and Wales within their realm, and the equal vigour with which the inhabitants of those countries resisted all attempts to bring them under subjection.

The English invasion of Ireland has many remarkable features, but possibly none more surprising than the fact that, when in 1170 Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke, surnamed "Strongbow," proceeded to carry out his promise of helping Henry II. to "pacify" Ireland, he did so with a force of almost ridiculous insignificance. He had previously sent over one of his adherents, Robert Fitzstephens, with a mere

handful of men who had occupied Wexford, and were holding it apparently without difficulty. But Strongbow's own main body amounted to no more than 200 knights and 1000 other soldiers, a small contingent, indeed, with which to attempt the invasion of a considerable island. Strongbow, however, was an excellent leader, and promptly entered upon a career of victory which began to alarm his royal master. Accordingly, Henry II. conceived the idea of crossing to Ireland in person, and taking the whole country under his sway. Landing near Waterford in October 1171, with 500 knights and 4000 other soldiers, he took over from Strongbow the city of Dublin and other fortified places along the coast, and shortly received the submission of the native Irish rulers, including that of the redoubtable King Roderick of Connaught, who had obtained the paramount superiority over the remaining kingdoms of Munster, Meath, Ulster and Leinster, and had previously claimed titular supremacy as King of Ireland.

Henry II. was also engaged in a good deal of stiff warfare with the Welsh, at whose hands he suffered some severe repulses, but the principal struggle between England and Wales took place in the reign of Edward I. on the refusal of Llewellyn to pay homage to the English throne. The Welsh resistance was a stout and skilful one, but in Edward I. Llewellyn met more than his match. The operations were interesting as an early instance of combined naval and military attack, for the English fleet sailed round to the Welsh coast and co-operated to excellent purpose

with the land forces of the King. A temporary peace was concluded in 1277, but in 1282 war again broke out, resulting in the death of Llewellyn in battle with an English detachment in December of that year. The war was continued by the Welsh Prince David who, in his turn, was captured, tried, and executed. The fable of the massacre of the Welsh bards and the pretty story of the Princedom of Wales conferred by Edward I. on his baby son born at Carnarvon Castle, can hardly be termed of military significance, although they are carefully included in the military records of this period. The operations in both Ireland and Wales had an early and important consequence, in that they awakened the English kings to a sense of the importance of the use of light-armed troops, a point to which reference was made in the last chapter. The damage wrought by the half-wild Irishmen and the poorly-armed Welsh against the flower of the English army, when the latter happened to become involved in some morass or were toiling up the steep mountain sides, was a sharp reminder of the value of such hitherto despised auxiliaries to the ordinary component parts of a moving army. It is an interesting fact that in the French wars a number of Irish and Welsh were thus employed, and those who have read their Shakespeare, and have lingered lovingly over the glorious account of the day of Agincourt in *Henry V.*, will recollect what a gallant, if eccentric, figure is presented by the Welshman, Fluellen, in that memorable story.

Whilst the operations in Wales and Ireland

partook of the nature of guerilla warfare, those against Scotland were of a wider and deeper military significance. We need not here enter into the long tale of victory and defeat which culminated in the decisive triumph of the English army over the Scotch at Nevill's Cross in Northumberland. But special mention must be made of the important battle of Falkirk in 1298. The forces led by William Wallace on this great occasion were chiefly of infantry armed with the spear or long pike, and these were drawn up by their leader in four compact masses, called schiltrons, which formed rings or squares, with the first rank kneeling, after the fashion in which modern infantry "prepare to receive cavalry." The remainder of Wallace's force consisted chiefly of about 1000 horse, who at an early stage of the battle rode off without striking a blow. The English men-at-arms dashed against the schiltrons with great impetuosity, but at first to no purpose. Eventually the battle was won by the English archers, who, having overpowered the few Scottish bowmen interspersed among the schiltrons of spearmen, were told off to pour their arrows into the schiltrons themselves. When some disorganisation had been effected, Edward, who had drawn off his cavalry for a space, now poured them upon the schiltrons, which thereupon broke and scattered in confusion. Fifteen thousand Scots are said to have been slain in this battle, while the loss on the English side appears to have been trifling.

Of the battle of Bannockburn, near Stirling, on 24th June 1314, it is sufficient to say, in the

words of Creasy, that "it was the most complete overthrow that the military power of England has ever sustained." English troops have met repulses and reverses before and after the day of Bannockburn, there have been many wars in the course of which small English armies have been routed, destroyed, or captured; but never, except at Bannockburn, was the largest and the best English army that the land at the time could send forth beaten in a fair pitched battle by a numerically inferior foe. The full force of England was then not only beaten, but routed—not only routed, but hounded by its victorious enemies for miles and miles off the field of Bannockburn in bloody chase and panic flight. To the battle itself Bruce's device of scattering calthrops on the field with a view to impeding the advance of the English cavalry, and the manner in which he overwhelmed the English archers by the sudden onslaught of his own mounted men, lend a special tactical interest.

It goes without saying that the pleasing ultimate result of our Irish, Welsh and Scottish wars has been the addition to our modern army of regiments which, for fighting quality and splendid loyalty, are second to none we possess. As distinct corps the Irish, Scottish, and Welsh regiments have attained a glorious individuality which assuredly no chronicler could wish to impair. But even more strongly to the mind of the present historian the fact presents itself that, in company with the Englishman, his comrades from the other countries of the Union constitute that familiar "good old mixture," which renders

the British Regular Army of to-day such a striking compound of every good fighting quality to be found anywhere in the wide world.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CAMPAIGNS OF CRÉCY AND POITIERS.

EVERY schoolboy knows that Edward the Third, the Greatest of the Plantagenets, as he truly deserves to be called, claimed the throne of France through his mother Isabella, and persuaded Parliament that his claim was, if not just, at any rate worthy of national support. Edward's assumption of the title of King of France in 1337 was followed by active operations, with, however, no serious result—except as regards the naval battle of Sluys, which for thirty years gave us the command of the sea—till 1346, when Edward changed his base to the mouth of the Seine. On July 12, 1346, Edward landed in Normandy, and, after plundering Caen, pushed on to Rouen. Finding the bridge over the Seine strongly held, he turned towards Paris, after threatening which he succeeded in crossing the Seine at Poissy and then marched north towards Flanders, with Philip of Valois at the head of the French army in hot pursuit.

Narrowly escaping being enclosed in the corner between the river Somme and the sea, Edward contrived to cross the mouth of the former by the Blanchetacque ford, just as Philip coming up behind him was met by the incoming tide.

Edward now decided to stand at bay near the village of Crécy, while Philip went round to cross the Somme at Abbeville in order to attack him. The English force appears to have consisted mainly of 4000 men-at-arms and 12,000 archers, but, in addition to these, there were a considerable number of Welsh and Irish light-armed irregulars who are especially mentioned by Froissart as having taken part in the battle. Edward arranged his troops along the rising slopes to the north and north-east of the village of Crécy in such a manner as to face the French coming from Abbeville. The army was on foot, in three divisions: the first, led by the Prince of Wales, in front; the second, under the Earl of Northampton, a little to the left rear; the third in reserve under the King himself. In each division the archers were arranged on a succession of little terraces in the hillside, so that the ranks in rear could shoot over the heads of those in front.

The battle took place on August 26, the French having begun their march from Abbeville at daybreak on that day. Some indecision marked the French advance, and the troops were tired and disorganised before the attack commenced. The Genoese cross-bowmen, who formed the van of the French army, suffered under the disadvantage of having the strings of their cross-bows wetted and weakened by showers of rain that had fallen. These drawbacks notwithstanding, Philip decided on coming into action and ordered the Genoese to commence the fight. The latter let fly a volley of bolts which the state of their cross-

bows rendered ineffective. This was replied to by a deadly fire of arrows from the English archers, with the result that the Genoese were thrown into instant confusion. Enraged with the behaviour of these hapless mercenaries, Philip commanded his own men-at-arms to hew their way through them to the English lines. In the ghastly confusion which ensued, and which was naturally increased by the deadly rain of English arrows, the Irish and Welsh irregulars rushed in upon the struggling mass of French and Genoese and cut them down with their knives. By mere weight of numbers the French at length reached their objective, but failed to break down the English defence. For a long time a hand-to-hand battle was maintained between the attacking French and the first and second English divisions. But both on the English left and centre the French attack failed, although supported by a large mass of German men-at-arms in Philip's service. Remaining unbroken, although hard pressed, the English divisions engaged maintained their ground without necessitating the advance of the reserve, and when night fell the French army was in hopeless rout. The slaughter of the French continued the next day, thus completing one of the most brilliant successes which has ever been accomplished by the British army in face of greatly superior numbers. The military lessons of Crécy are sufficiently obvious. The splendid fire action of the English archers effectually neutralised the attempted shock action of the French men-at-arms, after the first insignificant performance of the Genoese cross-

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bowmen. But great credit is also due to the staying power of the English men-at-arms who resisted charge after charge of the enemy with a doggedness unsurpassed in the squares at Waterloo. Speaking generally, the battle brought into strong prominence the grand quality of British infantry, and incidentally it inculcated that sublime disregard for mere numerical superiority on the part of the enemy, which has always characterised the British Army, and which, while contributing to its occasional discomfiture, has been productive of some of its most stirring triumphs.

After the battle of Crécy, Edward laid siege to Calais, which held out gallantly for nearly a year, and the capture of which brought to a close Edward's own operations in France. A second stage of the war was developed by Edward the Black Prince. Emboldened by the success of a plundering expedition in the south of France in 1355, the Black Prince in the following year made a raid upon the provinces south of the Loire. John, who had succeeded Philip of Valois as King of France, sought to put an end to this devastation, and, having assembled a large army at Chartres, crossed the Loire, and succeeded in intercepting the Black Prince's retreat towards Bordeaux near the city of Poitiers. "God help us!" exclaimed the Black Prince, as he found how completely his passage was barred, and how strong was the enemy, "We must now give our thoughts to how we can fight them best." Accordingly he promptly occupied a piece of rising ground about a mile from the moor in

front of Poitiers, on which the French were posted. The English position was intersected by hedges and rows of vines, in which a gap was formed by a long lane permitting the passage of not more than four horsemen abreast. Half the English archers were drawn up to cover the gap, the other half being thrown forward among the hedges and vine rows that flanked the lane and opened toward the French position. As at Crécy, the men-at-arms awaited behind the archers the main onset of the enemy. As at Crécy, too, the English army was formed in three divisions, without, however, any reserve, the Black Prince taking the right, with his right flank thrown well forward, the left and centre formed by divisions under the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick. The enemy attacked at the gap, but were met by such a storm of arrows that advance after advance failed. The lane soon became crowded with dead bodies, and at a critical moment, while the French first and second divisions were pressing back in confusion on the third, which was commanded by King John in person, the Black Prince moved down from the English right on to the open moor, and completed the disorder. After a tremendous conflict, in which King John, battle-axe in hand, fought gallantly under the Oriflamme, the English gained the mastery, and John himself was captured.

The battle of Poitiers led to further fighting, in the course of which the English marched to Paris, and eventually the war was brought to an end by the conclusion of the Treaty of Bretigny in 1360.

Of the closing years of the fourteenth century little need be said, beyond a bare allusion to the intervention of the Black Prince in the affairs of Spain, and his defeat of Henry of Trastamare in 1367 at Najara in Spain. The subsequent renewal of the war with France was disastrous, by reason chiefly of the naval reverse at Rochelle, where the Earl of Pembroke was badly beaten by the Spaniards and our command of the sea was temporarily lost. But no epoch-making battle was fought on land by the British Army during the rest of the century, and such warfare as took place on the Continent consisted chiefly of small skirmishes in which the balance of success was usually with the French. The death of the Black Prince, in 1376, removed a typical general of the time, splendidly courageous, of keen military insight, and a born leader of men, but rash to the verge of folly up to the moment of battle, and, as indicated in the terrible slaughter at Limoges, a ruthless conqueror where the "lower orders," habitually despised by the chivalry of the age, were unhappily concerned.

# SECTION II.

## CHAPTER I.

### RISE OF THE HIRED SOLDIER.

THE fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the earlier half of the seventeenth constitute an epoch of curious importance in our Army's history. Essentially a period of transition, it was also an age of progress, and that, too, in grooves the form and direction of which are clearly retained in our latter-day military system. Such epochs are of immense significance in the story of any growth, but particularly so in that of an institution whose annals are naturally divided into at most four or five distinct periods.

Looking a little back we shall find that feudalism, with its attendant chivalry, was indeed but a mere temporary development. We have seen how it gave way on the battlefield to the British archer, for, largely speaking, the conflict at Crécy was between Continental feudalism and a rising British school of soldiership as demonstrated by the archer and by the man-at-arms of the later type. It goes without saying that knighthood did not yield without a struggle to the new order of things. To some extent it was able to bear up against the crossbow bolt and the clothyard shaft by increasing the strength of the armour worn; but soon a point was reached at which progress

in this direction was necessarily stopped. At the time of Crécy the average knight was simply enveloped in armour, not of the old light sort, which consisted chiefly of metal rings sewn on to leather or other stout material, but made of whole plates of metal shaped to the body and covering the wearer from head to foot. It needed horses of a special breed to carry men mailed in this fashion, and, once wounded, or even dismounted, the knight was usually *hors de combat.*

A yet greater change was about to take place owing to the introduction of gunpowder. According to some accounts, cannons were used at Crécy; but, if they were, it was to very little effect, and it cannot have been until at least a hundred years later that they came to be at all seriously regarded from the standpoint of practical warfare. At the same time, even in its very early days, gunpowder must have had a marked moral effect, and long-headed military scientists must have guessed that in it lay the germ of a coming revolution, not only of tactics, but of the whole art of war. At first the change was very gradual, and up to the battle of Agincourt the archer must easily have retained his supremacy as the most useful all-round fighting man of the period. Even during the wars of the Roses the arquebus and culverin were probably nearly as dangerous to those who "loosed them off" as to the enemy, while in any case the actual damage done by these quaint weapons at any but very short ranges must have been wholly insignificant. Indeed, one cannot help thinking that by far the most important effect which the introduction of gunpowder

had in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, must have been the gradual yielding to its influence of the system of castles and fortresses which was so highly characteristic of the days of so-called feudalism. Against the archer a Norman castle could make a stout resistance, as exemplified in the stirring story of that romantic siege of Torquilstone, Scott's description of which is one of the finest battle-pieces ever composed. But against even the culverin it was not always easy to hold a fort or castle for an indefinite period. The earliest artillery was constructed to throw balls of considerable weight, and these eventually could make a breach in any ordinary wall. Such possibilities must have produced a distinct feeling of apprehension in the holders of those formidable fortresses which, for three centuries at least, marked the supremacy of the noble over the surrounding holders of the land. But it must still be understood that the introduction of gunpowder brought about very slow changes indeed, and that in the interval considerable vitality was shown by the older system of fighting, which had been in vogue since William the Norman crushed Harold of England at Senlac. Nor was the long-bow the only important weapon of the time apart from the sword. Considerable significance is attached to the growing use by the men-at-arms of this period of a useful weapon known as the half-pike, a weapon in its way almost as fatal to the belted knight as was the long-bow. For when he had passed unscathed through the deadly rain of cloth-yard shafts, and was pressing home to the heart of the defence, the mounted nobleman

often met his fate at the hands of a brawny man-at-arms who, with a thrust of his pike, could soon unhorse any but the most dexterous horseman, particularly if the latter's attention happened to be engaged in another direction.

The system of contracts under which soldiers went to foreign wars in the time of the Angevin kings was continued to a much later period. One of these contracts is quoted by Dr Bright in his English History, and the extract may well be reproduced here. The agreement was one which was made by Henry VII. with George, Earl of Kent, who has to provide "vj. men-of-arms, his owne person comprised in the same, every one of them having with him his custrell and his page; with xvj demi-launces, xvj archers on horsebak, and lx archers on fote, of good and hable persons for the warre, horsed, armed, garnished, and arrayed sufficiently in all peces and in every thing as after the custume of warre ought to appertayne." This contract is interesting, not only as bearing in a picturesquely accurate manner upon the military history of the time, but as making mention of a distinct organisation in the shape of archers on horseback, which, about this period, appear to have attained considerable significance. It can easily be understood that many military leaders would attach much importance to a mobile class of bowmen, who could be sent to this or that flank, or could come readily into action after a long march. History repeats itself in military matters as in all else, and in the mounted archer we see exactly the same point of culmination as

has been reached, on another line of progress, in the mounted infantryman of the present day.

Reverting to what was said at the commencement of this chapter as to the transitional nature of this period, a few words may here be usefully interpolated with a view to illustrating the development of the soldier himself, as considered apart from his weapons and the tactics of the battlefield. We have seen that during the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Fyrd or Militia of the Shires was practically speaking in abeyance. In 1181 an Assize of Arms had regulated the Fyrd as a home defence force on a system which was subsequently expanded in the Statute of Winchester passed in 1278, but from the time that Henry II. instituted scutage, and so provided himself with a means of obtaining hired soldiers who would serve so long as they were paid or could pay themselves by plunder, the militia remained, and continued for succeeding centuries to remain, a good deal in the background. Gradually the place of both the armed freeholder and of him who owed service on a more or less feudal tenure was absorbed on active service by the stipendiary soldier, archer, man-at-arms, or musketeer as the case might be. The obvious reason for this was that, in the case both of the Fyrd and of the feudal tenant, the military service which could be demanded was but a limited one, and, consequently, no provision could be made for the uncertain contingencies of a foreign campaign. It followed as a matter of course that a class

of professional soldier grew up which had to be seriously reckoned with, and which certainly constituted the origin of our present regular army, although until the middle of the seventeenth century that origin could have been but vaguely defined. At the close of a campaign in which stipendiary soldiers were engaged there were thrown upon their own resources large bodies of men who had lost touch with agriculture, and had acquired a very pronounced taste for soldiering. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries these were wont to form themselves into what were known as "Free Companies," which were glad to hire themselves out to nearly anyone who chose to employ them. Our own wars provided this class with pretty regular employment on the Continent up to and including the campaign of Agincourt, and, after that, the wars of the Roses brought the hired soldier into further prominence, and made him, to all intents and purposes, a permanent feature of English social life.

Concomitantly with the decay of chivalry we find a refreshing decrease in the employment of foreign mercenaries, until at the time of the wars of the Roses there seemed to be very few Continental professional fighting men left on English soil. Once more the army had become an English army, whether it happened to be divided against itself or united against a common foe, as English as it had been in the days preceding the Danish invasion, and very much more effective. The period covered by the Kings of Lancaster and York, the House of Tudor, the Stuarts, and

the Commonwealth, was a stormy, and, in many respects, a sad one. But it was part of the making of England for the English, and in it the foreign military ideas and the foreign soldiers introduced by the Norman and Angevin kings rapidly gave way to a stronger indigenous product which soon asserted itself by sheer fighting quality, and which, it is easily seen, bears a very close family resemblance to the British soldier of to-day.

## CHAPTER II.

### AGINCOURT AND AFTER.

THE closing years of the fourteenth and the commencement of the fifteenth century were marked by some intestinal troubles, chiefly in connection with Scotland and Wales, but it was not until the campaign of Agincourt under Henry V., who, in 1414 put in a formal but none the less ridiculous claim for the French crown, that the English army was engaged on anything like an history-making scale. The events leading up to this notable campaign were extremely simple. In August 1415, Henry embarked at Southampton with a force of 24,000 archers and 6000 men-at-arms, and, having sailed to Havre, proceeded to lay siege to Harfleur. He succeeded in capturing the latter town, but the operation, through sickness, cost him a considerable portion of his force, and, after leaving a garrison for the defence of Harfleur, Henry could only take the field with an efficient

force of 5000 archers and 900 men-at-arms. To plunge into the interior with this handful would have been absurd. Henry accordingly determined to march along the coast to Calais, and in the first instance made for the ford at Blanchetacque at the mouth of the Somme, which had been crossed by Edward I. just before the battle of Crécy. The ford was, however, strongly guarded, and Henry had to march up the bank of the river for a considerable distance before he could make a crossing. From Peronne he struck in a N.W. direction towards Calais, but arriving at Agincourt, some forty miles south of Calais, he found his road barred by a large army under the Constable of France, with whom was the Duke of Orleans.

The French force seems to have numbered about 50,000, practically all men-at-arms. These were drawn up in the usual three divisions in a position which, for utter fatuity in the circumstances, could hardly have been surpassed. The force was, in fact, jammed between two woods, with some very sticky ground in front of it, thus depriving the French of the advantage they should have possessed of fighting on a much wider front than the English, and of being enabled to envelop the latter almost at will. Henry imagined that his little band would have to fight on the defensive, and, as a wise precaution, ordered his archers to provide themselves with a stout stake apiece with which to form a sort of impromptu stockade. On the night of October 24, battle was clearly inevitable between the two badly-matched forces, and the night was spent by the

two armies in a fashion which seemed appropriate to their respective chances of success.

HENRY V.

Shakespeare has drawn a vivid picture of the riotous confidence of the French and the sober

preparation of the English on the eve of this momentous "Crispin's Day."

At eleven o'clock next morning, the battle began by Sir Thomas Erpingham, the English Marshal of the Host, tossing up his baton with the cry "Now strike!" Surprised to find the French delaying a forward movement, the English archers shot volley after volley into the French ranks, whose forward movement was found to have been impeded by the simple fact that they were knee-deep in mud. At last some of the French cavalry pressed forward, but only a tithe of those who started on the charge succeeded in coming into close quarters with the English, so deadly was the archery practice of the latter. Confusion worse confounded broke out in the French ranks until the archers, who had previously been shooting from behind their stakes, issued forth, much as the British infantry subsequently did at Minden, and fell headlong upon the enemy. During the advance, a cry arose that the English rear was threatened, and, in an unfortunate moment, Henry gave the word to kill the numerous prisoners which had already been captured. Hundreds had been slain in cold blood before it was discovered that a mistake had been made, and that the rear had not been threatened at all. By this time the battle was practically won, and 10,000 Frenchmen had been killed, among them the Constable of France and the Dukes of Alençon, Brabant, and Bar. The Duke of Orleans and many other knights and nobles, aggregating 15,000, remained prisoners in the hands of the English. The

English loss, which included the Duke of York and the Earl of Oxford, amounted to 1600 only. From the glorious field of Agincourt Henry at once proceeded to Calais, and thence in triumph to England.

The second invasion of France was undertaken in 1417, and in 1419 Henry captured Rouen. In 1420 the Treaty of Troy resulted in his marriage with Catherine of France, an episode of which Shakespeare has given us a delightful souvenir in a well-remembered scene in Henry V., Henry's own character as a bluff soldier being very attractively delineated. The next year the swing of the pendulum began by the defeat of the Duke of Clarence, who had been left to manage English affairs in France, at Beaugé, where Clarence had been foolish enough to attempt to dispense with his archers. This misfortune was strongly accentuated by the troubles which occurred in 1428 through the arrival on the scene of Jeanne d'Arc, whose subsequent capture and burning as a heretic was one of the basest acts of revenge ever laid to the charge of an English king or soldier. The reason for the French success lay largely in the fact that on the Continent, as in England, the feudal system was beginning to be found unsuited to the purposes of a protracted campaign, and accordingly the hired soldier had come, as with us, into prominence. We need not follow at all closely the minor Continental operations of this period. It is sufficient to say that things, so far as we were concerned, went rapidly from bad to worse, until, in 1450, Calais alone, of all the great possessions

which the Angevin and Lancastrian kings had won in France, remained in English hands.

Not much is to be learnt, in a military sense, from the wars of the Roses. They were epoch-making to a very serious extent, because they were not only civil wars, but wars marking off two great historical periods broadly defined as mediæval and modern England. In the main, the fighting was faction fighting, and has been happily described as a tissue of hereditary family rivalries resting upon merely personal grounds. The Lancastrian party represented largely the baronial influence in the north of England, while the strength of the Yorkists lay chiefly in the south and west. In the main the numbers engaged were but small, although at Towton it is said that 60,000 Lancastrians and 48,000 Yorkists were opposed. Another point was that the majority of the troops concerned were composed of untrained men, and not of the hired soldiers who had done such fine service on the Continent, and to whom war was practically their only profession. After most of the battles in the wars of the Roses the majority of the armies engaged returned to the cultivation of the fields, and it is due to this fact that, during the whole continuance of the wars, trade and justice were largely uninterrupted. From fighting of this sort it was not likely that any large military lessons could be learnt, and the remarks made in the previous chapter hold good as to the very gradual fashion in which the use of gunpowder, now becoming quite popular and usual on the Continent, extended to the English army.

A typical and in some respects highly interesting battle was that of Barnet, fought on the morning of Easter Day the 14th April 1471. Here in both armies we find both flanks composed mainly of cavalry and artillery, with the infantry in the centre. The latter were largely armed with bows and bills; but in the Lancastrian force were included a number of pikes, the use of which was becoming more general owing to the stirring example set in the employment of this weapon by the Swiss, who served at this time as models to most European armies. An interesting feature of the fighting was the presence on Edward's side of a number of London citizen soldiers who may be taken as the germ of the future trained bands, and the more modern Volunteer Army.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE ARMY UNDER THE TUDORS.

Of the soldier in the sixteenth century a very vivid as well as deeply instructive account was given some years back in an article in *Macmillan's Magazine*, to which the present writer is largely indebted for the facts contained in this chapter. The article in question, though anonymous, may reasonably be attributed to the author of the standard "History of the British Army," the Hon. J. W. Fortescue, whose monumental work is not likely to be superseded in this generation at any rate, and who combines with fulness

of knowledge, and true historical acumen, a charm of style which renders his treatment of even the driest and dustiest portions of his subject as pleasant as it is invariably informing.

For the first half of the century we see the bow still in evidence. In 1512 a statute was passed for enforcing constant archery practice on the whole male population of the kingdom, and this was followed in 1542 by a formal prohibition of the use of the bow to all aliens without the king's license. Again, in 1544, the ordinances of war, under which Henry commenced his operations in France, were largely devoted to bow and arrow equipment. It is pleasant to note that in the field the English archers proved worthy of the trust still reposed in them. At the siege of Terouenne in 1537, the English archers, laagering themselves behind the wagons of a victualling train which they were escorting, repulsed very spiritedly an attack of French cavalry, a striking illustration of the admirable vitality attached to the old and characteristic English weapon with which so much of our early military history was bound up.

The archers were again to the fore at Flodden Field, that bad defeat which the Scotch brought upon themselves by invading England in the absence of Henry VIII. in France. Here the first move was won by the good strategy of the Earl of Surrey, to whom the safety of England in Henry's absence had been entrusted. Finding the Scotch king strongly posted on the hill of Flodden, with his left flank covered by the river Till, his right by an impassable morass

and with his front securely guarded by massed artillery, Surrey passed up on the right and swept round on what had been the original rear of the Scottish position. The Scots, finding themselves compelled to fight, attacked, and with some success on the English right and centre. But the English archers on the left not only hurled back the attacking Highlanders with a storm of arrows, but delivered a counter-stroke on the Scotch centre, thus altering wholly the chances of the fight. The resulting slaughter of the Scotch was enormous, and included the King himself and his chief nobility.

The campaign of 1544 in France is memorable in that it saw the introduction of the scarlet uniform for the first time in the field. The English forces, says Fortescue, were distinguished at large by the badge of St George's Cross; but one body at least was clad in blue coats, garded with red, and in hose with the right leg red and the left blue with a red stripe, and finally, the king's livery was of red garded with yellow. Later, in the Irish insurrections of 1579-83, we see a premonition of khaki in the request that the men may be furnished with coats "of a dark and sad colour, as russet and suchlike, and not of so light a color as blue and red which heretofore hath commonly been used."

The reign of Elizabeth saw a considerable revival in the attention paid to the military art. An early function of the reign was a review at Greenwich, at which 1400 men were on parade, of whom 800 were pikemen in fine corselets, 400 were arquebusiers in shirts of

mail with morions, and 200 were halberdiers in flexible armour. The proportion of pikemen to arquebusiers is instructive. Gradually it was altered, until, the arquebus having given way to the musket, the numbers of pikemen and musketeers were equal. By 1642 the English army had reached a third stage of development in this respect, and the proportion became two musketeers to one pikeman, a ratio which had already existed for some time in Continental armies.

Very close attention is given in the literature of the period to the usefulness of the pike, which was esteemed a very honourable weapon, and of great general efficiency. As a rule the pikeman was more of a gentleman than the musketeer, a point which is brought out quaintly and forcibly in Shakespeare's Henry V.; where the king, wandering in disguise through his camp, is accosted by the Ancient Pistol and asked whether he is an officer or "base, common, and popular." "I am a gentleman of a company," replies the king. "Trailest thou the puissant pike?" asks Pistol, and is answered in the affirmative. To be a pikeman required a finer physical development than to be a musketeer, not only because the weapon itself required more strength to wield it, but because the pikeman was compelled to wear a considerable weight of defensive armour in the shape of a corselet and headpiece, and sometimes a gorget to protect the throat, and tassets to cover his thighs.

The small-arms of the period were very simple.

Our earliest firearm was, as has been noted, the arquebus, which in the time of Elizabeth gave way to the caliver. This, by the time of the civil wars, had been generally replaced by the musket which, at first, was fired with the help of a wooden rest. During the reign of Elizabeth the arquebus and the caliver are chiefly in evidence as firearms, and the caliver is specially mentioned as the weapon with which the London trained bands used to practise at the Mile's End, which was a famous drill ground in Elizabeth's time.

Talking of the trained bands brings us to the consideration of the military system of the time, which appears still to have had as its foundation a combination of fyrd and feudal tenure. From the mass of men available under this system, Elizabeth ordered that in every county "a convenient number of able men" should be "sorted in bands, and trained and exercised in such sort as may reasonably be borne by a common charge of the whole county." As a matter of fact London was the only centre at which these trained bands did any actual training, and the state of the militia in general appears to have been one of scandalous inefficiency and unpreparedness. A considerable impetus, however, was given to the military spirit of the nation by the approach of the Spanish Armada, the enthusiasm in connection with which, and the formation of an entrenched camp at Tilbury, are familiar episodes of the school books.

It is a good thing for England, undoubtedly, that no invasion of her shores actually took place

during the reign of Elizabeth. If the fleet had not succeeded in keeping every enemy at bay there is very little doubt that, in spite of enthusiasm, we might have suffered some terrible reverses on land, owing to the state of desuetude and military inefficiency into which the manhood of the nation had fallen, and from which it was only beginning slowly and with difficulty to emerge. The lack of foreign operations of any considerable magnitude had greatly reduced, if it had not altogether obliterated, the class of trained hired soldier, to the rise of which the first chapter of this section was devoted, and for this class the trained bands were a wholly inadequate substitute. When during the later years of Elizabeth's reign an army for offensive purposes would have been invaluable, it was found simply not to exist, and this painful state of things continued well on within the Stuart period, until events brought about drastic changes, culminating not only in the outbreak of civil war, but also in the formation of that New Model which is the basis of our modern army.

The concluding quarter of the sixteenth century was marked by a singular wealth of military literature, largely produced by men who had served in the famous armies of the Continent. Of these special mention is made by Fortescue of Barnaby Rich's "Pathway to Military Discipline" (1587), and William Garrard's "The Art of War," which was published about the same time. Another literary soldier in 1598 published a dialogue between a captain and a gentleman, in which the latter upholds the "bows, black bills, and jacks,"

with which our ancestors won many battles. "Sir," answers the captain, "the wars are much altered since the fiery weapons first came up, the cannon, the musket, the caliver, and the pistol." The military man proceeds to make, in the quaint phraseology of the day, a remark which shows that the profession of arms was regarded in the Tudor times very much as it used to be regarded not so very long since. "Such as had followed the wars," he says, "are despised almost of every man, until the very pinch of need doth come." Does not this clearly foreshadow Kipling's

"It's Tommy this, and Tommy that, and Tommy get away,
But it's 'Thank you, Mr Atkins,' when the band begins to play?"

## CHAPTER IV.

### KING AND PARLIAMENT.

THERE is hardly a more wretched period in the history of the British Army than that covered by the reigns of James I. and Charles I., not only because those thirty years were not marked by any accession of glory to the British arms, but because the military desuetude into which the nation was allowed to sink was remarkable to a dangerous and humiliating degree. James was, to use the words of a historian, both "peaceful and careless of the national honour," and although later, in the stress of the struggle between King and Parliament, the Royalist army became a more

or less vertebrate institution, the military condition of the country during the greater part of Charles I.'s reign was fully as deplorable as it had been during that of his predecessor. Still the thirty odd years in question are of serious importance, as marking the introduction to an epoch of immense significance, in which Cromwell's New Model changed the whole current of British military thought, and produced organic reforms destined to bear fruit later in the regimental system of the British Army as it is to-day.

The paltry intervention of James I. in the affairs of the Continent calls for little comment. In 1620 he allowed a small contingent of 2200 volunteers, under Sir Horace Vere, to assist bravely but ineffectively in the defence of the Palatinate. In 1624 six thousand other volunteers went to Holland to help the Dutch against Spain. In January 1625, twelve thousand men sailed under Count Mansfeld to serve in Lower Germany, but these were mostly pressed men, and of such wretched quality, and so ill-provided, that by the following April scarce a tenth of the number were left.

Charles I. had hardly ascended the throne when the expedition to Cadiz, under Sir Edward Cecil, took place with disastrous results. A more useless, drunken rabble probably never came under military discipline, and among the officers many were utterly inexperienced courtiers, who owed their commissions to Buckingham. Two years later Buckingham himself led the equally ill-starred expedition to the Isle of Rhé, in which nearly 5000 out of 8000 men were lost.

It is very evident that the soldiers raised by impressment at this period gave a great deal of trouble. Their pay seems to have been withheld, owing to the difficulty experienced by the King in obtaining the necessary supplies; and their mutinous conduct, coupled with the burdensome system of billeting them upon private citizens, began to be hotly resented by the public. In 1628 one of the four points of the Petition of Right was that soldiers and mariners should not be billeted on the people without their will, a fact which proves clearly that the abuse in question had begun to press all too heavily on the long-suffering country. From 1628 to 1639 all the fighting done by British soldiers was under foreign flags; but in 1639 and 1640 two Scottish wars occurred to demonstrate how utterly inadequate the British military system was to stand anything like a serious strain. The force with which the Covenanters, under Field-Marshal Alexander Leslie, entered upon the wars was a well-drilled one of 500 horse and 22,000 foot. Charles raised an army of about equal numerical strength to meet the threatened invasion, but in point of fighting quality and discipline the Scots were immensely superior. The rout of Newburn followed and the humiliating treaty of Ripon, where a preliminary arrangement was made that, pending final peace, the Scottish army should remain in England, with a monthly payment of £40,000 from the English exchequer.

And thus we come to the opening of that tremendous conflict between King and Parliament which first took really active shape in the refusal

of Sir John Hotham, at Hull, on April 23, 1642, to deliver up to the King the arms and ammunition of the late Northern Army. The Parliament having previously failed to persuade the King to give them the control of the trained bands of the country, had passed the Ordinance of the Militia, and now put it into force. Charles countered this by issuing a Commission of Array, and, to use the words of Dr Bright, "There were thus in every county two recruiting centres, the one attempting to carry out the Parliament's Ordinance and the other the King's Commission. Active and energetic members betook themselves to their own counties to assist the Parliamentary claim, and England was filled with petty skirmishes and disputes." To the Earl of Essex was given the command of the Parliamentary army, the Earl of Lindsay being nominally the Royalist General, although, as a matter of fact, the chief command of the Cavaliers lay with Prince Rupert, who had come over with his brother Maurice from the Rhenish Palatinate. The standard of the King was raised at Nottingham on August 22, 1642, and on October 23 the first battle of the war was fought on the plain at the foot of the north-west slope of Edgehill. The advantage lay with the King, whose cavalry under Rupert charged with immediate effect, but little was gained owing to the want of discipline among the Royalist troops, who fell to plundering the Parliamentary baggage, and thus allowed the infantry of Essex to assert themselves. In this battle was disclosed the essential weakness of the Parliamentary troops, which provoked Cromwell's outspoken statement

that "It was plain that men of religion were wanted to withstand these gentlemen of honour," a remark subsequently expanded into the organisation of the New Model.

In the early part of the Civil War as much use as possible was made by either side of the trained bands which, since the death of Elizabeth, constituted, with the exception of the men pressed for the above-noted expeditions, the only military organisations of the country. These trained bands were composed wholly of pikemen and musketeers, the bill and the bow having been definitely abolished in 1596. In London the trained bands arrived at a considerable pitch of enthusiasm, if not of efficiency, and in 1614 their numbers were fixed at 6000. By 1643 the three regiments of the suburbs, the six regiments of the city, and six regiments of auxiliaries, had amounted to 18,000 men, and these for some time constituted the Parliamentary reserve. But the trained bands as a whole proved of very doubtful service in the Civil War. After a while both sides resorted to voluntary enlistment, and at the end of the year impressment became necessary. Between 1643 and 1644 the King issued commissions for impressing men in twenty-nine different counties, and in August 1643, Parliament authorised the impressment of 2000 men in London and 20,000 men in the eastern counties, a previous ordinance having authorised County Committees to impress soldiers, gunners, and surgeons as might be needed. In all it is reckoned that some 60,000 or 70,000 men were raised and armed on each side, but, in

spite of this, the numbers engaged in the chief battles never amounted to more than half that number. At Edgehill, for instance, the King had only about 14,000 men and Essex about the same. At Marston Moor in 1644, Rupert had about 18,000 men; and the Parliamentarians, under Leslie, Fairfax and Manchester, about 26,000.

Much of the strength on both sides was frittered away by the multiplication of small scattered forces; while, in the case of the Royalists, still further weakness was caused by the difficulty of maintaining the troops. This led to a system of small garrisons, distributed among various districts in order that the troops might live at free quarters on the county, a system obviously as fatal to "big battalions," as it was detrimental to the popularity of the Royalist cause.

There is no need here to follow the course of the Civil War in detail, but separate mention must be made of the extremely important battle of Marston Moor, the numbers engaged in which have already been given. The Fairfaxes had been joined in Yorkshire by Leslie and Manchester, and Rupert, evading the Parliamentary armies which were lying around York, had effected a junction with Newcastle. The two forces met upon the plains of Long Marston at five in the afternoon on July 2, 1644. In Cromwell's description of the battle he writes: "We never charged but we routed the enemy. The left wing which I commanded being our own horse, saving a few Scots in our rear, beat all the Prince's horse. God made them as

stubble to our swords; we charged their regiments of foot with our horse, and routed all we charged." While this successful action was being taken on the left, the Parliamentary right was being very roughly handled, so much so that several generals left the field, believing all to be lost. Cromwell, however, after routing Rupert's cavalry, prudently refrained from pursuit, and returned in time to check the rout of the Parliamentary right. So completely did he succeed in turning the fortunes of the day that Rupert, after his flight, could only with difficulty collect 4000 or 5000 of the scattered Royalists, and York and Newcastle, in fact the whole of the north of England, fell into Parliamentary hands. It is true that in other directions the year 1644 was anything but a fortunate one for the Parliamentarians, but Cromwell was becoming more and more surely a tower of strength, and a few months later he was able to put into a concrete shape the military improvements of which he had given the enemy a foretaste in the Roundhead charges at Marston Moor.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE NEW MODEL.

WE have seen how quickly it dawned upon Cromwell after the battle of Edgehill that the Parliamentary Army, as at first constituted, was utterly unable to bear the shock of a conflict with the Royalist troops. The latter, composed as they were of superior material, and led by

officers with considerable experience of Continental warfare, were more than a match for the third-rate levies of Parliament, and it was clear to Cromwell that some counterbalancing influence in the form of sentiment must be made use of. He quickly saw that religion might be called to the assistance of Parliament in this matter, and that the stern Puritanism which dominated his own character and that of the leading men on the Parliamentary side might prove a valuable factor in levelling up the lower classes of the army to an adequate standard of efficiency. Men of religion, he thought, might successfully withstand the "men of honour" among the Cavaliers, and it was not long before the manner in which he put this principle into practice taught many a bitter lesson to the Royalist side.

But Cromwell did not make the mistake of supposing that religion alone would compensate the manifest military advantage possessed by the enemy. With religion it was necessary to couple organisation and discipline, and while religion remained the rock on which the Puritan army was founded, the bricks and mortar of the structure were the system which Cromwell imported into the remodelled army, and the order which he introduced throughout all its ranks. There continued to the Restoration to be a good deal of the snuffling quotation of texts and the elaborate psalm-singing which marked the purely sectarian character of the Puritan revolt against Stuart extravagance and looseness of life. But beyond all this the Roundhead soldier was a trained and disciplined soldier in his later

development, and, from the day that the New Model came into being, the system on which the Parliamentary Army was organised was a sound system applicable to the needs of the time, and capable, as will be seen, of expansion, until it became adequate to the needs of Continental warfare on a large scale, and to the gradual acquisition of a great colonial empire.

The history of the formation of the New Model is a very short story. The rapidity with which the idea took concrete shape was a striking proof, not only that it was badly wanted, but also that the material was ready to hand and sufficiently ductile. No possible success could have attended the introduction of the New Model at this or any other juncture unless the men available had been of a sound type, so far, at any rate, as qualities of courage, resistance, and resolution were concerned. This fact is brought into stronger prominence by the circumstance that for a considerable time the officers in Cromwell's army were by no means of an equal standard of excellence. When the New Model was formed it was said openly that few of the officers were fit for their places, and for some years a good many retained their commissions who were manifestly incapable, even when judged by a standard altogether different from that which Puritanism laid down. It is not too much to say that at this period, as at well nigh every other period of our military annals, the goodness of the soldier in the ranks proved a sure stay, while the quality of many who held commissions left much to be desired. Reverting to the history of the New

Model, it is clear that Cromwell during the whole of 1644 was much engaged in the contemplation of the changes which were necessary to this end. It was not, however, until November of that year that Parliament could take the condition of its forces into really careful consideration. Even then the quarrel between Cromwell and Manchester blocked the way of reform, and might have done so indefinitely had not Cromwell suddenly ceased his attacks, and given himself heart and soul to his army reform project. On December 9, 1644, he introduced the Self-denying Ordinance by which all members of either House of Parliament were made ineligible for commands in the new army. This expedient for removing Manchester, Essex, Denbigh, and Waller, as well as Cromwell himself, from the list of new commanders was, in the first instance, unsuccessful, but meanwhile the Commons proceeded with the scheme of army reorganisation, and early in January 1645 the outline of that scheme was voted. At first only about 22,000 men were provided for by incorporating what remained of the armies of Essex, Manchester, and Waller into the New Model army, the command of which was given to Sir Thomas Fairfax. But gradually the other armies under the Parliament were absorbed until, in 1652, the Commonwealth had nearly 70,000 soldiers under arms. In the early stages of the New Model the soldiers continued to be enlisted by impressment, but between 1651 and 1660 it was found possible to fill the ranks by voluntary enlistment.

Fairfax, as the head of the New Model, was at

first simply a General in command, but in 1647 he became Commander-in-Chief, being succeeded

CROMWELL.

in 1650 by Cromwell as Captain-General and Commander-in-Chief. As Commander-in-Chief

both these leaders had extraordinary power and freedom of action, and appear to have exercised them to the fullest degree. Parliament at one time did endeavour somewhat to restrict the movements of Fairfax, but soon gave up the attempt, and eventually the Commander-in-Chief became to all intents and purposes independent, although just before any important battle it was usual for him to call in the assistance of a Council of War.

Next in rank to the General were the Lieutenant-General and the Major-General, one charged with the command of the horse, the other with that of the foot. The Lieutenant-General commanding the Horse had under him a Commissary-General of horse, as second in command of the cavalry, and various other staff officers. The Major-General commanding the Foot had under him a Quartermaster-General and Adjutant-General of the foot. After the Major-General in charge of the infantry came the Lieutenant-General of Ordnance, who commanded the artillery and the engineers. Other staff officers were also appointed to the charge of various departments, among whom were the Commissary-General of Victuals and the Waggon-Master-General in charge of the transport. There was also a very important officer known as the Scout-Master-General, who was clearly the ancestor of our present Intelligence Department.

The artillery of the New Model employed several kinds of guns, notable the culverin, which carried a ball of from sixteen to twenty pounds in weight, had a point-blank range of about 400

yards and an extreme range of about 2000, required eight horses to draw it, and could be fired ten or twelve times an hour; the demi-culverin, of slightly shorter range, which carried a ball of from nine to twelve pounds; a saker, which carried a ball five or six pounds in weight; and the minion and drake which were three and a half and two, or two and a half, pounders respectively. In 1647, Fairfax's artillery train contained in all fifty-six guns, besides mortars and siege cannon, and included sixteen demi-culverins, ten sakers, fifteen drakes, and fifteen still smaller field-pieces.

The principal feature of the cavalry of Cromwell's army was its use of the pistol, which it had borrowed from the German *reiters*. At first the charge used to be delivered very slowly, the pistols being discharged during the process with a view to demoralising the enemy. But subsequently Cromwell appears to have charged with much greater impetuosity, reserving his fire until he came to close quarters. Much of Cromwell's success as a cavalry leader lay in his taking the initiative, a point which he doubtless learnt by observation of the tactics of Prince Rupert. Apart from the regular cavalry of this period, considerable importance was attached to the use of dragoons, who were the forerunners of the mounted infantry of the present day; these were indifferently mounted and wore no defensive armour. Their offensive arms were a sword and a "dragon," which is described as "a short piece with a barrel sixteen inches long of full musket bore, fitted with a snaphaunce or firelock." But

the name of dragoon was freely bestowed upon any sort of mounted infantryman so long as he carried any kind of musket or firelock. At its formation the New Model contained eleven regiments of regular horse of 600 men each, and one regiment of dragoons 1000 strong.

The infantry of the New Model consisted of twelve regiments of 1200 men apiece. The proportion of musketeers to pikemen was two to one, and the musket used carried a ball weighing about one and a quarter ounces. The first form of the musket was the matchlock, a very uncertain weapon which often missed fire and could only be discharged very slowly. During the Cromwellian period it began to be superseded by the firelock musket. The full effective range appears to have been 400 yards, but in battle musketeers usually delivered their fire at a much shorter distance. At first the formation of infantry was usually six deep, but this gradually gave way to a reduction to three deep, which not only produced a broader front, but facilitated loading and firing. A deeply instructive account of the infantry tactics of the day, as well, indeed, as of every detail connected with the New Model, is to be found in "Cromwell's Army," by Dr Frith. (Methuen, 1902.)

Such in the merest outline was the New Model, of which not the least remarkable feature was the fact that it was the creation of a man who, until middle age, had had no military experience or training, and who yet proceeded to the task of military organisation with a calmness and an accuracy of judgment unsurpassed in the case of

any army reformer before or since. What is even more astonishing is the wonderfully permanent character of Cromwell's system which, as regards essentials, has retained its shape and form for two centuries and a half, and is likely to do so for centuries yet to come. Moreover, it must be remembered that Cromwell was no paper reformer. He not only called the New Model into existence, but he led it repeatedly to victory. This fact alone is of supreme interest and importance, and would, apart from his political achievements, surely be sufficient to hall-mark Cromwell as one of the greatest men the world has ever seen. From time to time opinion seems to wobble as to Cromwell's character and civil career, and the great lurid episode which stands out from all others in his tremendous life is regarded, and always will be regarded, from widely different standpoints. But one thing will always remain certain, both as a soldier and as a military organiser, Cromwell has claims to veneration which cannot but be readily, if not enthusiastically, conceded. As a general he showed himself a complete match for successive adversaries who had the advantage of years of previous experience, while he himself had, as has been seen, to learn his tactics as he went along. As a cavalry leader he was in his way as dashing as, and much more level-headed than, Rupert himself. On either of these grounds he takes a very high place in the list of England's best fighting men. But his New Model gives him a separate title which will endure so long as the British Army endures.

It will be a bad day for England when she altogether forgets the debt of gratitude she owes on the military side, to say nothing of other disputed obligations, to him whom history calls the great Protector, but who was plain "Noll" to the soldiers he led and fashioned to his own stern liking.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE ARMY UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH.

By May 1645 the New Model was in a sufficiently advanced state to warrant the renewal of operations, and accordingly, with the 22,000 men available, and with Cromwell as Lieutenant-General, Fairfax took the field. He met the King at Naseby, near Market Harborough in Leicestershire, where a great battle was fought much on the lines of that at Marston Moor. Prince Rupert, at the head of the Royalist horse, crushed Ireton who commanded the Parliamentary left, and Cromwell, who had charge of the Parliamentary right, was equally successful against the left wing of the King's troops. Again checking his pursuit, as at Marston Moor, he caught Rupert's returning wing in the flank, and in the subsequent rout the Royalist infantry broke to pieces. From this it will be seen how completely Cromwell had mastered the tactics of the enemy, and what splendid use he made of the cavalry which, throughout this period, attained a prominence far greater than it did

during even the age of feudalism. Another defeat of the King at Rowton Heath in September 1645, and the annihilation of his Scottish adherent, the Marquis of Montrose, at Philiphaugh, practically ended the war so far as Charles I. was concerned. Astley, the last of the King's generals, was beaten at Stowe-in-the-Wold in March 1646, and, after the surrender of Oxford in June, nothing remained for the unhappy King but a succession of desperate intrigues and negotiations terminating in his trial and his execution at Whitehall, on January 29, 1649.

Two years before the Commonwealth came into actual being serious difficulties arose between Parliament and the Army. In Parliament the Presbyterians had obtained the ascendency, and in 1647 they made a strong attempt to disband the Parliamentary troops, and, incidentally, to deprive them of the greater portion of the pay due to them. The Army naturally resented this move with warmth, and after appointing a sort of Parliament of their own, in which even the privates were represented by men elected by themselves, they obtained temporary possession of the King's person, and, marching towards London, lay around it. Alternately they then withdrew and approached, until the Parliament, from which the most prominent Presbyterian members had thought it wise to withdraw, agreed to give up the idea of disarmament.

It is not necessary here to follow the Army through the various stages of its incursion into

politics. That incursion lasted on and off from 1647 to 1660, and in many ways constituted a very unfortunate interval. With the exception of a brief period occupied by the Scotch war of 1650-1, the Army was for these thirteen years constantly in evidence as a political factor, and in 1653 it became to all intents and purposes the Government. Later, in 1655, for the space of a year, England was actually under a definite system of military administration. Cromwell, having no Parliament and being compelled to rely entirely on the Army, divided England into ten, and subsequently, twelve districts, over which he set Major-Generals subordinate only to himself and to his Council. These Major-Generals had charge of the militia in their districts, and so powerful were they that they were enabled to levy from the Royalists an income-tax of ten per cent., known to history as "The Decimation." It is a remarkable fact that, as a historian observes, "although arbitrary, the people, weary of disturbance, made no objection to this government, which, on the whole, worked well and justly."

The period of the Commonwealth is chiefly remarkable, from the standpoint of actual military campaigning, for the Irish and Scotch wars. In Ireland the Royalists had been assisted by rebels, and, making common cause, these had hemmed in the Parliamentarians in Dublin and Londonderry. Near Dublin, however, early in August 1649, the Parliamentarian General, Jones, succeeded in beating the Royalist leader Ormond, and an opening was thus afforded to Cromwell,

who himself arrived on the 15th of that month and took supreme command. After making some necessary reforms in the organisation and discipline of the force, Cromwell advanced northward towards Drogheda, which he took by storm, and the garrison of which, numbering between 3000 and 4000, he put to the sword. This terrible act of severity has been laid to Cromwell's charge as an inhuman massacre; but there is no proof that any were put to death except the garrison, and it seems certain that the example, terrible as it was, saved, as Cromwell intended it should save, much subsequent bloodshed. Leaving Venables and Coote to relieve Londonderry and to conquer Ulster, Cromwell turned southward to Wexford, which he stormed, and the garrison of which he put to the sword, as at Drogheda. In May 1650, Cromwell, having taken Kilkenny and overrun Tipperary, closed his victorious career in Ireland by the capture of Clonmel.

Meanwhile, in Scotland, the Covenanters had been levying troops and corresponding with the Prince of Wales. The Parliamentary command in Scotland had been given to Fairfax, but, he having declared that he had conscientious scruples against fighting the Scotch, it was transferred to Cromwell, who also had scruples, but was content to stifle them in the thought that the cause of civil and religious liberty was endangered by the hostile attitude of the Scotch army. Passing the Tweed with an army of 16,000 men about the middle of July 1650, he found himself in opposition to the Scotch under David Leslie. Marching by the coast and obtaining his supplies from the

fleet, Cromwell reached the neighbourhood of Edinburgh without succeeding in bringing Leslie to an engagement. It then became necessary for him to withdraw towards his supplies, and he accordingly fell back on Dunbar, which lies on a peninsula jutting out into the Firth of Forth. The heights surrounding the base of this peninsula were occupied by the Scotch army, as was also the pass through which lay the road to Berwick. In over-anxiety to close every outlet Leslie made the mistake of coming down from the high ground into the narrow tract which lay between him and Cromwell's position. While he was engaged in this operation Cromwell fell upon him, driving back the horse of his right wing upon their main body, with the result that the whole army was thrown into confusion and Cromwell obtained a complete victory.

Cromwell now marched from Dunbar to Edinburgh, which he entered, and the Scotch retreated to a strong position near Stirling. With a view to taking them in the rear Cromwell crossed the Forth, thus leaving the road to London open. The Scotch, who had been joined by Charles, advanced into England, but Cromwell overtook them at Worcester and completely defeated them. From this battle, described by Cromwell as the crowning victory of the war, Charles only escaped with difficulty, and Cromwell marched triumphantly to London, leaving Monk with 5000 troops in Scotland to complete the restoration of order in that kingdom.

After the death of Cromwell the Army soon showed it had no love for his son Richard, and

made a strenuous effort to separate the civil and military commands and to place the latter in the hands of Fleetwood. The dissensions which followed, and which were accentuated by the retirement of Richard, made way for the approach from Scotland of Monk, who had been for years commanding the army in that country. Monk, supported by Fairfax, marched to London, and, having received the submission of Fleetwood and the troops in London, proceeded to reduce the Army to a right frame of mind by removing all officers whom he could not trust to be obedient. A free Parliament, which decided in favour of the restoration of the monarchy, followed, and in April 1660 Charles was invited to return to his kingdom.

This chapter may be fitly terminated by a striking quotation from Dr Frith's "Cromwell's Army." "Thus ended the political activity of the Cromwellian army. It had propagated democratic principles and imposed religious freedom with pike and musket; it had initiated many interesting political experiments and drawn up four constitutions. In time the aims, which it had at heart, were to be realised by other hands and by more appropriate methods. But for the present all that it bequeathed to English political life was a rooted aversion to standing armies and an abiding dread of military rule."

# SECTION III.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE RESTORATION.

It had clearly been intended to disband completely the army of the Commonwealth at the Restoration, and in the first year of Charles II.'s reign a large sum of money was voted by Parliament to enable the King to give the troops their arrears of pay and discharge them into civil life. The bulk of the Army, amounting to fifteen regiments of horse and twenty-two of foot, was accordingly disbanded, but it was thought desirable to retain a small force for "Royal Guards and Garrisons," the original stipulation being that the number should not exceed 3000. The Yeomen of the Guard and Gentlemen-at-arms (founded by Henry VII. and Henry VIII.) were revived, the Household Cavalry was inaugurated by the formation of "Troops of Life-Guards of Horse," and Monk's Coldstream Regiment of Foot was converted into the Coldstream Guards. From this small force the regular army of the present day is descended. In 1661 a regiment was raised for service in Tangiers, which subsequently became the 2nd "Queen's." In 1662 the Grenadier Guards were formed from troops brought back from Dunkirk, and, regardless of the prior claim of the Coldstreamers, it was decreed by the King

that this "our own regiment of Foot Guards shall be held and esteemed the oldest regiment. At this time regiments were held on three different establishments—English, Scotch, and Irish—and it was not until a corps on either of the two latter came on to the English establishment that it was given its Army List seniority. Thus the Royal Scots which, although of hardly sufficient antiquity to justify its old nickname of "Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard," dates back to a very early period of service as the Scottish Archer Guard of the French kings, was not incorporated into the British service until 1678.

In the early days of the Army, regiments were known by the names of their Colonels, and the Colonel commanding a regiment was a very great man indeed. In 1661 a Secretary-at-War was appointed, through whom the King's commands were issued to the Colonels, but this official was not, until about a hundred years later, responsible to Parliament, and, to all intents and purposes, the regimental Colonel was in direct touch with the King. So long as his regiment made a good show and was fairly ready for foreign service when called upon, no questions appear to have been asked, with the result that both recruiting and the general upkeep of the regiment were conducted on a very loose system. Numbers, and definite regulations as to the uniform of regiments, were not issued until nearly a hundred years after the Restoration.

By 1662 the numbers of the little force at the King's disposal had risen to about 5000. The retention of even this small force was exciting

a good deal of popular discontent, but Charles II., bent upon freeing himself from all Parliamentary restraint, sought gradually to increase his military entourage, until at his death the regular army consisted of about 8000 men. In 1677 Parliament had demanded war with France, and an army had been collected between 20,000 and 30,000 strong, but the mere sight of such a force frightened the Commons, and the troops were presently disbanded.

Without following these early stages in which our modern regular army was gradually developed, it is interesting to note that in the reign of Charles II. the introduction took place of a weapon destined in after days to become as characteristic of the latter-day English soldier as the longbow was of the English yeoman of the Middle Ages. The first mention made of the bayonet is in a British Royal Warrant of 1672, and, curiously enough, the mention occurs in connection with the armament of a regiment of dragoons who were to be provided with a "matchlock musket, a collar of bandoliers, and a bayonet or great knife." The weapon was first made at Bayonne, and was originally a mere dagger stuck in the muzzle of the musket. Its portability and usefulness gradually enabled it to oust the pike, which, however, was well in evidence until the last days of the 17th century.

Another notable point in the military history of the reign of Charles II. was the rise of Monmouth, to whom belongs the distinction of having been the first Commander-in-Chief of the regular British army. It is true that the army in question was

but a few thousand strong, but at one time, and for a short period, it was under the military chiefship of James, Duke of Monmouth. The latter, moreover, had as his "eldist brigadier of foot," that rising soldier, Colonel John Churchill, who afterwards, as Duke of Marlborough, piled up for himself an imperishable reputation as one of the greatest soldiers the world has ever seen.

It was not until the reign of James II. that either Monmouth or Churchill came into any great military prominence, if we except the former's victory over the Covenanters at Bothwell Bridge, and a certain amount of rough-and-tumble service in the Low Countries. The meeting of the two former associates at Sedgemoor was of a very painful character, to one of them, at any rate. Monmouth had come over from France in the hope of attaining sufficient support to enable him to capture the throne, and, landing in the west, had secured a considerable following. After some initial success he had retired on Bridgewater, followed by the Royalist army under Feversham and Churchill. There is little doubt that Monmouth had expected Churchill, his old friend and comrade-in-arms, to join him, but Churchill, ever an adept at noting which way the cat was jumping, preferred to cleave to the Royalist cause. The battle of Sedgemoor might have given Monmouth a considerable advantage, for Feversham was no general, and Churchill, until after the battle was won, had little chance to assert himself. Monmouth attempted to fall upon the three divisions of the King's army by night; but, having made

no proper reconnaissance, his troops were brought to a sudden standstill, and his cavalry thrown into confusion, by coming unawares on a great ditch by which the moor was drained, and on the other side of which the Royalist army, alarmed by a careless pistol shot, was beginning to form in readiness. Monmouth's infantry fought their way across the ditch, but to no purpose. Churchill had the King's troops well in hand, and in the absence of Feversham, who had risen from bed too late to take any active part in the proceedings, dealt havoc among Monmouth's scattered ranks. Monmouth himself fled, only to be caught and executed. His followers suffered terribly at the hands of the victorious troops of the King, among whom "Kirke's Lambs," so called from the Pascal Lamb of Portugal which was the badge of Kirke's regiment, distinguished themselves by frightful brutality.

James II. made several efforts to increase the standing army, and in 1686 formed a permanent encampment of regular troops upon Hounslow Heath. But he was never popular with his troops, and the Army, with which Churchill had tampered freely, made little difficulty in transferring their allegiance to William of Orange, after the latter's landing at Tor Bay and James's subsequent flight. The circumstances surrounding William's invasion are not pleasant reading for those concerned in the honour of the Army, but it is consoling to reflect that the latter was only just beginning to struggle into recognised existence, that the times were very evil and James II. was a very despicable sort of master,

and that Marlborough was an insidious and powerful tempter. Finally, a considerable section of the Army subsequently showed itself heartily ashamed of the part which it had been made to play in the introduction of a foreign prince to the English throne.

## CHAPTER II.

### A STANDING ARMY.

THE period from 1688 to 1702, which is covered by the reigns of William and Mary, is, of course, in a military sense chiefly remarkable for the gradual evolution of the genius of Marlborough; but, as a matter of fact, it was not until he received command of the Allied Armies at the opening of the war of the Spanish Succession, in 1781, that this mighty soldier was able to give a fair exhibition of his quality. It is true that his position was a lofty one, and it is worthy of note that in 1690 he was appointed by William, who was then setting out for Ireland, Lieutenant-General and Commander of all the Forces remaining in England during the King's absence. Later, he himself embarked for Ireland, and did excellent work in the reduction of Cork and Kinsale; but his subsequent disgrace, owing to the communication he treasonably opened with the master he had formerly betrayed, relegated him in 1692 to inactivity, and it was not until after William's death that he commenced that

magnificent series of victories which caused his many faults as a man to be largely merged in the dazzling brilliance of his military fame.

Before proceeding to glance briefly at the military career of William III., it is instructive to record an important development which took place in the early part of his reign with reference to the status of the British Army as one of the institutions of the kingdom and the country. Before the crown was offered to William the Declaration of Rights was drawn up, and in this it was solemnly affirmed that, without grant or consent of Parliament, no army could be kept up in time of peace. The accession of William subsequently created in the Army a good deal of disturbance, which found an outlet, in at least one instance, in open mutiny. This led to the passing of a Mutiny Act, which in our own times was succeeded by the Army Act, still passed annually, and constituting the basis of our system of military law. Thus was evolved a system under which not only the Army, but its discipline, was made a matter of annual renewal at the will of Parliament. Every year we see put forward the Army Estimates, which provide money for the requirements of the Army in every one of its branches. Every year, too, we see the Army Act solemnly re-passed, and in this way the old objection of the English nation to a standing army is surmounted. As a matter of fact we have a standing army, and probably always shall have one, but, by what may be termed a constitutional fiction, that army is liable in any year to come to a sudden end, whether the Sovereign

wishes to keep it on foot at his own expense or not. For, without the consent of Parliament, a standing army in this country is positively illegal.

In 1690 William III. prepared for war in Ireland, where, for some time previously, things had been in a very unhappy state. Lord Tyrconnel had started an unscrupulous campaign in favour of Catholicism, and the Protestants had found themselves beleaguered in Enniskillen and Londonderry, in the latter of which strongholds 30,000 were eventually collected as a last asylum. At this juncture the ex-King James came over from France with a number of French troops, and himself proceeded to the siege of Londonderry. This was eventually relieved after one hundred and five days, during which terrible privations were suffered. A considerable body of troops was now sent over by William under Marshal Schomberg, who had won a notable reputation on the Continent, but who is described by Lord Wolseley as being by this time "old, gouty, and arrogant." This notwithstanding, Schomberg displayed considerable skill in the disposition of a very wretched and untrustworthy force, composed for the most part of raw recruits. He might have secured some success had he not had to fight against both treason and pestilence. The force suffered, too, from scandalous mismanagement, and from the infamous behaviour of the Chief Commissary, who supplied the army with uneatable food, and even had the hardihood to let out the troop horses, when collected, to English farmers. In 1690 William himself passed over to Ireland, and advanced southward; the Irish army, reinforced

by the French troops under Lauzun, falling back behind the Boyne, where James proceeded to make a stand.

James's position was a fairly strong one, and, had it not been necessary to strike an immediate blow, William might well have been dissuaded from attacking it. He advanced, however, on the morning of July 1, himself taking the left wing, which was composed entirely of horse, and entrusting the centre to Marshal Schomberg. He had previously sent young Schomberg some miles up the river in the hope of turning the left flank of the Irish army. On this flank there was at a place called Duleek, four miles south of the Boyne, a narrow passage which ran between two impassable bogs. Fearing lest the English should close this passage, and hearing that young Schomberg was moving in that direction, Lauzun with the French troops left the Irish army and proceeded towards Duleek. At first the battle raged hotly in the bed of the river. Poor old Schomberg himself fell while rallying a number of Protestant refugees, and was killed. Gradually the English gained the upper hand, and, with the help of William, who had crossed and come up on the left, the Irish army was driven in confusion past the French through the passage of Duleek. Only about five hundred English are said to have been killed, and about three times as many Irish, but the defeat was the death-blow to James's hopes. A check was encountered by William at Limerick, the siege of which had to be raised; but, with the help of Marlborough, considerable headway was made, and in the following year the opera-

tions under Ginkel, which included the deadly battle of Aughrim on July 12, completed the subjugation of the country, and for more than a century there was no more trouble in Ireland.

Meanwhile the mixed state of affairs in Scotland had brought about, on July 27, 1689, the interesting battle of Killiecrankie, in which the Lowland troops were commanded by Mackay and the Highlanders by Graham of Claverhouse, now Earl of Dundee. At this battle the bayonet, destined afterwards to win such glory for the British soldier, played but a sorry part. As mentioned in the last chapter, it was in its early form merely a great knife, which could be stuck in the muzzle of the musket, and it took some minutes to fix it. While the Englishmen were fumbling with this clumsy contrivance, the Highlanders had thrown away their firelocks and had rushed in with their broadswords, throwing the regulars into complete confusion. It is satisfactory to note that, profiting by his experience, Mackay afterwards introduced the plan of fixing the bayonet to the exterior of, and not in, the muzzle of the musket. The subsequent attempts of the English to stamp out the smouldering embers of the Civil War in Scotland were marred by the ghastly Massacre of Glencoe—an episode over which, as it is merely an episode, though none the less a very painful and disgraceful one, it is permissible to the present writer to draw a veil.

In 1695 began the long struggle with France, which really lasted till the battle of Waterloo, but which, so far as William was concerned, was marked chiefly by the battles of Steinkirk and

Landen and the siege of Namur. At Steinkirk were engaged predecessors of the Royal Horse Guards, the 4th Hussars, the 3rd, 4th and 6th Dragoon Guards, the Grenadier and Coldstream Guards, and the 4th, 6th, 7th, 10th, 16th, 19th, 21st, 25th and 26th Regiments of Foot. At the siege of Namur were present the 1st, 5th, 6th and 7th Dragoon Guards, the 1st, 2nd and 4th Dragoons, the 4th and 7th Light Dragoons, the 5th, 15th, 18th and 19th Foot, forming one division to keep in check the relieving force of Marshal Villeroi, while the siege itself was carried out by the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 16th and 17th Foot. The Siege of Namur, as Colonel Cooper King remarks, was the first instance of the surrender of a great fortress by a French Marshal to a British General, and, even though reduced to an extremity and relief was impossible, Marshal Boufflers declined to capitulate without the formal preliminary of an assault.

During the nine years from 1688 to the conclusion of the Treaty of Ryswick on September 10, 1697, the numbers of the Army had risen to some 80,000, and the King would have been glad to keep that number permanently under arms. The national feeling, however, against a standing army of this size was too strong, and Parliament resolved that the number of soldiers should be reduced to about 10,000. In 1698 a further Bill was carried lessening the number to 7000, and making the condition that these should be all born Englishmen, which necessitated William's dismissal of his favourite Dutch Guards.

In 1701 fresh trouble arose with France, and

10,000 troops were despatched to Holland under Marlborough. In 1702 the war was commenced in earnest, with results sketched lightly in the succeeding chapter.

## CHAPTER III.

### CORPORAL JOHN.

THE reign of Queen Anne marks no particular historical epoch in a political or constitutional sense, nor can it be said to constitute an era of any special importance in the development of our Army as an institution. But it is none the less remarkable, since it brings upon the stage, not only of English history, but of the history of the whole of Europe, the extraordinary figure of John Churchill, afterwards Duke of Marlborough, in the capacity of a great and successful champion of English, Dutch and Austrian rights against the influence of France, supported by the troops of Bavaria and Spain. It must be remembered, too, that Marlborough's great victories had a marked effect upon the development of our Colonial Empire, which at this time was in its earlier stages of growth. It is an interesting circumstance that, in conjunction with the operations on the Continent, the work of our Army went on in a totally different part of the globe, since it became necessary for Great Britain to send to the West Indies seven regiments of infantry to fight the enemy in that remote quarter, and so to

lay the foundation for what subsequently became one of our most important colonial possessions.

The four great victories of Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde and Malplaquet render the period from the accession of Queen Anne in 1702 to the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 one of extraordinary military brilliance; but, apart from these great triumphs, there is not a great deal to be learnt from the rather wearisome strategy and tactics which preceded and surrounded the operations under Marlborough, and those of inferior importance, but still of much vigour and merit, under Peterborough and Stanhope in Spain. No attempt here will be made to follow the campaigns in question at all closely, if only for the reason that such an endeavour is outside the real scope of this story, and to make it would probably prove fatiguing and profitless to my readers. Wherever Marlborough's great genius asserts itself it is easy for even the lay mind to become interested; but a connected story of the military operations in the great Flanders quadrilateral, in which most of the work was done, would be impossible without a detailed record of the tedious series of marches and countermarches, and goings into winter quarters, which constituted much of the strategy of the day. As Fortescue remarks, the object of a campaign at this time was not necessarily to seek out an enemy and beat him. "The two alternatives prescribed by the best authorities were, to fight at an advantage or to subsist comfortably. Thus to enter an enemy's border and keep him marching backwards and forwards for weeks without giving him a chance of striking a

blow was esteemed no small success, for he was therefore forced to conceal his own supplies, and to impoverish and harass his troops to death without accomplishing anything." These "negative campaigns" were varied by occasional sieges in which the French Court especially delighted, since it gave it an opportunity of attending the operation with great pomp and ceremony and very little danger. For the rest there was infinitely more chess-playing about warfare in the days of Marlborough than there has been since the middle of the nineteenth century, and although Marlborough was largely successful because he laughed at, and took advantage of, the stately deliberation of movement which was characteristic of contemporary strategy, he cannot be said to have emancipated himself entirely from traditions to which he was bound very fast, not only by the military theory and practice of the time, but by the nature of the allies with whom he had to work, and the quality of the English troops he had himself to lead. On not a few occasions he took personal command where it was possible that general control at a distance might have been productive of even more useful results, and this, coupled with other features, such as the woeful inefficiency of many of his subordinates, and the necessity for constantly subordinating military movements to political considerations, sometimes of a very unworthy kind, render any detailed study of Marlborough's strategy and tactics of much less use to the military student than might be supposed from the real greatness of his military reputation.

Reverting to the quality of Marlborough's troops, there is little doubt that the raw material was simply execrable. Men were obtained often by most unworthy methods from the very scum of the population. Every reader of "Tristram Shandy" knows that our army in Flanders, under William III., with which Corporal Trim had some uncomfortable experiences, "swore horribly," and it was with an army composed of similar riff-raff that Marlborough won his four great victories. But under him, as under Wellington, the British soldier, however low and bad his origin, did splendid credit to military discipline. Marlborough, like Wellington, was a rigid disciplinarian, and to his soldiers it was rapidly brought home that no departure from soldierliness during the conduct of an important operation would stand much chance of escaping condign punishment. Yet his rule was by no means harsh, and it is on record that he would allow no severe court-martial punishment to be carried into effect without his personal knowledge and confirmation. Apart from all this, he exercised over his men that same galvanic influence which a few great leaders only in the world's history have possessed, and which at all times has been synonymous with victory under the most unpromising conditions. In that respect he had the advantage of Wellington, just as to-day Lord Roberts may be said to have had the advantage of Lord Wolseley. There is something antithetically curious, perhaps instructive also, in the fact that, while Lord Roberts has given us an important and deeply interesting little study of

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"The Rise of Wellington," Lord Wolseley should be devoting his leisure to the completion of a monumental biography of the Duke of Marlborough.

Turning to Marlborough's battles, that of Blenheim, following on a campaign in 1702 which was rendered fruitless through the bad offices of his Dutch allies, may be taken as a particularly fine example of Marlborough's originality and boldness of conception. In this case he left the Flanders quadrilateral to the protection of the Dutch, and carried the campaign into the heart of Germany, meeting the enemy under Tallard at Blenheim or Blindheim, between Dillengen and Donauworth, on the north bank of the Danube. Tallard had been joined by the Elector of Bavaria, but the two armies were encamped separately, and thus presented, in proportion to their numbers, a very weak front. Marlborough had, on August 12, 1704, effected a junction at Hochstadt with Prince Eugene, who had been commanding the Austrian army on the Rhine. On the following day, noting the enemy's weakness, he determined to attack, adopting a formation directly contrary to that usually in vogue, that is to say, he formed his line of battle with the cavalry in the centre and the infantry on the flanks. While the British battalions on the left made no impression on Blenheim, and Prince Eugene on the right was held in check by the Elector, Marlborough's cavalry in the centre, passing over the river, came into decisive action against the French centre, which broke and fled. The enemy's

flanks swerved back, and the English left were enabled to get the upper hand, with the result that the twenty-six battalions of the enemy in Blenheim were surrounded, the Elector's army retreated in confusion to the Rhine, and the French lost altogether some 40,000 men and 100 guns.

For a detailed account of the campaigns of Marlborough, from 1702 to the sanguinary conflict of Malplaquet in 1709, I cannot do better than refer the reader to Fortescue's account of Marlborough, in "From Cromwell to Wellington," edited by Spenser Wilkinson.

It is a thousand pities that Marlborough's career was not entirely a military one. While on active service he was, if not happy, at any rate as contented as the troubles inseparable from his difficult position allowed him to be, and he lost no opportunity of showing how entirely he was in his element as a thoroughly efficient and well-loved commander. By officers and men alike he was well nigh idolised, and his nickname of "Corporal John," strangely similar to that of "The Little Corporal" which was bestowed on Napoleon by his soldiers, shows how completely he won the affection and respect of the rank and file, whom he was ever ready to lead personally on an emergency, and particularly in the hottest stages of a hardly contested fight. Time after time "Corporal John" distinguished himself by the exhibition of courage of that dashing sort which always appeals to the non-commissioned ranks more forcibly than carefully drawn-out plans or patient

strategy. And with all this he combined real care for his men, and the pure soldierly instinct that tells the general just what he can get out of his army at any particular pinch, which is half the making of a successful campaign. Lastly, on the field of battle his judgment was unerring, and his eye as keen as that of an eagle. He saw in a flash the slightest weakness in an enemy's position, the slightest error in his movements, and acted on what he saw with a swiftness and vigour never surpassed by either of the two great leaders who made the next military epoch of European history such an intensely and thrillingly dramatic one.

In civil and political life Marlborough was another man. With many qualifications for statesmanship he united a quality of mind which sometimes produced action of a sadly questionable sort. It is not difficult to allow oneself to be carried away by Marlborough's dazzling military record into forgetfulness of the part he played towards James II. and William III. But, to use plain English, he was a black traitor to both. Of the real facts in regard to the enquiry into his conduct which took place in 1711, and terminated in his second disgrace, it would be difficult to speak without entering into details which are altogether outside the scope of this work. But there will always be those whom it will be difficult to convince that a man who, in regard to much greater matters of trust had proved so utterly wanting in principle, and who throughout his career gave repeated evidence of a singular love of pecuniary gain was altogether above suspicion

in regard to charges of a very base and sordid description.

After his second disgrace in 1711 Marlborough lived in comparative retirement till 1714 when he was reinstated, nominally as Captain-General, but without power. He died in 1722.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE ARMY OF THE GEORGES.

BETWEEN the fall of Marlborough and the rise of Wellington there is an interval of nearly a century in which the British Army did not make a great deal of progress in a professional sense, and in which it not infrequently sustained some rather serious reverses. But the period is interesting, even apart from the great struggles in India and America, the former of which led to the consolidation of an Empire, the latter to the loss of colonies which have since made history for themselves in a very striking fashion. To these two developments separate chapters will be devoted, but, before passing to them, it will be expedient to trace briefly the work of our soldiers at home, on the Continent, and in Egypt, from the death of Queen Anne to the commencement of the war in Portugal in 1808.

First let us give a word to the Commanders-in-Chief during this period, not because they were of any special eminence, but because they form rather a long link between the two greatest

Commanders-in-Chief the Army has hitherto had. On the second disgrace of Marlborough in 1711 he was replaced in command of the Army by James Butler, Duke of Ormond, whom Lord Wolseley describes as able and experienced in public affairs, "but as a soldier he preferred the pageantry of war to the hard work and rude realities of the field." In the reign of George I. Ormond was impeached and attainted, and fled with Bolingbroke to the Continent, where he lived in close relations with the Pretender, and died in 1745. John Dalrymple, Earl Stair, was made Commander-in-Chief in the succeeding reign, and was in command of the troops just before the Battle of Dettingen, at which George II. took the lead in person. For a single year, 1745-1746, Field-Marshal Wade held the Chiefship, having previously attained a notable reputation for the construction of military roads in Scotland and the disarmament of the Highland clans. Other Commanders-in-Chief of the Georgian era were John, Earl Ligonier; John Manners, Marquis of Granby; Field-Marshal the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway; Jeffrey, Lord Amherst; Frederick, Duke of York; and Sir David Dundas. Of these, Jeffrey, Lord Amherst, who held the Chiefship twice, is distinguished for the capture of Louisburg and all its dependencies in the Gulf of St Lawrence, a success which paved the way for the conquest of Canada. He was succeeded by Frederick, Duke of York, in 1795, and when the latter resigned after the enquiry into his conduct with reference to the sale of commissions by the notorious Mrs Clarke, Sir David Dundas,

a notable tactician, and author of the leading military text-books of the day, was head of the Army, pending the Duke of York's reinstatement in 1811.

We need not linger over this catalogue of names, distinguished as the latter are, except to point out that in 1793, when Jeffrey, Lord Amherst, was appointed for a second time to the Commander-in-Chiefship, on the outbreak of the great war with France, a new era of military administration was inaugurated. This year marks the first appearance of the Secretary of State for War, an official altogether distinct from the Secretary-at-War of the Restoration, inasmuch as he became responsible to Parliament for the Army, subsequently, as we shall see, obtaining a supremacy in the conduct of the War Department which in many respects places him above the Commander-in Chief himself.

The reign of George I. has very little military significance. It was marked by the Jacobite insurrection, the bottom of which was knocked out by the battles of Preston and Sheriffmuir. Thirty years later the cause of the Stewarts showed renewed vitality in the rising of 1745, but the defeat at Prestonpans of Sir John Cope —whose memory survives in the *reveillé* of the Seaforth Highlanders, "Hey, Johnny Cope, are you wakin' yet?"—and the victory of Falkirk, where Hawley was badly beaten by Prince Charles, were grimly compensated by the gory triumph of "Butcher" Cumberland at Culloden in 1748. Both at Falkirk and Culloden a distinguished part was taken by an officer who subsequently

left a very enduring mark upon the annals of the British Empire, Colonel James Wolfe. At Falkirk the English bayonets were turned by the Highland targets, thus exposing the soldier to the stroke of the claymore, a point considered of sufficient importance to necessitate the issue of an order by the Duke of Cumberland before the battle of Culloden that in future each soldier should strike, not at the man opposite to him, but at the man to the right, so as to pierce him on his unprotected side. The detail is an interesting point in the gradual evolution of bayonet fighting, which now steadily progressed till it reached its culmination in the battles of the Peninsular War.

Meanwhile, in 1742, the war of the Austrian Succession had led to the spirited battle of Dettingen, at which George II. behaved with such admirable coolness, narrowly escaping capture, and well meriting Thackeray's characteristic eulogium, "Whenever we hear of dapper George at war, it is certain that he demeaned himself like a little man of valour. At Dettingen his horse ran away with him, and with difficulty was stopped from carrying him into the enemy's lines. Dismounting from his fiery quadruped, he said bravely, 'Now I know I shall not run away,' and placed himself at the head of the Foot, drew his sword, brandishing it at the whole of the French army, and calling out to his own men to come on, in bad English, but with famous pluck and spirit." It is a pleasant reflection that the last British king who personally took part in battle should have maintained so worthily the

reputation of his predecessors, more especially of the great fighting Plantagenets, for personal courage.

In 1745 the campaign in Flanders was unpleasantly marked by the battle of Fontenoy, in which, in spite of the astonishing heroism and determination of the English contingent, a partial defeat was suffered. Here, as at Minden in 1759, the British infantry covered itself with glory, thus leading to a better understanding and freer use of that arm. A very brisk interval of fighting was represented by the period from 1756 to 1759, and in the latter year Horace Walpole remarks that "it was necessary to ask every morning what new victory there was for fear of missing one!" About this time the Militia was reorganised, the principle of the ballot and of a three years' service being adopted. In 1779 the siege of Gibraltar was commenced and lasted till 1782, the Rock being magnificently defended by General Elliott, afterwards Lord Heathfield.

In 1789 the French Revolution quickly brought us in renewed conflict with France, and a few years later we find Bonaparte entering upon that tremendous career which was subsequently to bring him in personal collision with our own greatest general. In 1799 Bonaparte, whose invasion of Syria had been nipped in the bud by Sir Sydney Smith's brilliant defence of Acre, had left the French army in Egypt to Kleber, and the assassination of the latter in June 1800 had given the command to Menou, a general of second-rate capacity. A British

expeditionary force of 20,000 men, who had been operating fruitlessly against Ferrol and Cadiz, was now despatched to Egypt under Sir Ralph Abercromby, troops under Sir David Baird being also despatched from India. A landing was carried out at Aboukir Bay under General, afterwards Sir, John Moore; and on March 21 the French were badly beaten at the battle of Alexandria. Among the British losses was the gallant Abercromby himself. General Hutchinson, upon whom the command devolved, subsequently compelled Menou to capitulate in Alexandria on August 27, an episode which must have forcibly impressed upon Bonaparte the fact that he could hope for no complete realisation of his ambitions until he had brought matters with England on land, as well as at sea, to a clear and final issue.

## CHAPTER V.

### COLONIAL DEVELOPMENTS.

It would be wrong to devote any very considerable section of this little story to the early history of "Britain beyond the Seas," for the simple reason that the Army is not really very intimately associated with the greater part of that history. When one comes to look closely into causes and effects one finds that it is to commerce, aided by the Royal Navy, our Imperial development has been mainly due, except, of course, in India,

where the growth has been very largely indeed a military one. The tale of our earlier attempts, brightly successful and very inspiring attempts some of them were, at colonisation, is of course deeply interesting and instructive, but the military thread which runs through it is generally a slender one, and there is no need here to exaggerate its importance. At the same time no story, however brief, of our Army would be complete without at least a passing reference to those two epoch-making events, the capture of Quebec and the loss of the American Colonies.

In 1758 the command of the English troops in America was taken over by Jeffrey, Lord Amherst, who, working in conjunction with the fleet under Boscawen, succeeded in capturing Louisburg and Fort Duquesne, thus cutting the French line of junction between Canada and the Mississippi. In 1759 Pitt selected General James Wolfe, who had already distinguished himself at the siege of Louisburg, to carry out a plan which he had formed for an attack on Quebec, the headquarters of the Marquis de Montcalm, commanding the French army. The original idea was that of a combined movement, but the combination failed, and eventually the attack had to be executed by Wolfe alone who, with 8000 men, embarked in the squadron of Admiral Saunders and reached the Isle of Orleans in the St Lawrence River on June 13. Quebec lies on the left or northern bank of the St Lawrence just above its junction with the St Charles. Below Quebec from the St Charles a ridge stretches along the bank of the St Lawrence to

the Montmorency falls. Along this ridge, called Beauport, was Montcalm's position, which was in communication with Quebec by a bridge across the St Charles. Behind Quebec are the Heights of Abraham, which were then believed to be inaccessible to an army. Wolfe made several efforts which, however, proved ineffectual to draw Montcalm from his position along the river. As the latter rendered any regular investment of the town impossible, Wolfe eventually determined to attempt the surprise of the Heights of Abraham. Accordingly, very early in the morning of September 13, he ferried over in boats his little army from a point above Quebec. With tremendous difficulty the soldiers forced their way up a passage at times so narrow that only one could pass, and by six o'clock in the morning, three or four thousand men were in position on the Plains of Abraham in front of the city. Montcalm, deceived by a feint which the British fleet was making below Quebec, had scarcely time to withdraw his troops from Beauport and cross the St Charles in order to meet the English advance. The actual offensive, so far as the resulting battles was concerned, was taken by the French, who came on with great gallantry, but were completely shattered by the fire of the English. That fire was reserved until the last moment, the troops with magnificent discipline standing with their arms at the shoulder until after they had received rolling volleys from the whole front of the attacking French. Both Wolfe and Montcalm fell; but the former, before he died, learnt that he had won the

battle, and five days afterwards Quebec was surrendered.

Wolfe presents a very gallant and a very lovable figure among British generals. He entered the army when he was fourteen, and died at the age of thirty-three, having in the meantime seen an immense amount of varied and vigorous fighting. He was a quiet, shy man of insignificant presence, but he habitually inspired confidence by his excellent good sense and personal courage. The latter was notably exemplified in his last battle by the manner in which, after being shot in the wrist in an early stage of the fight, he hastily bound up the wound with his handkerchief, and passed down the ranks calling to his men to be steady and reserve their fire. The officers of several regiments wear a line of black running through their gold lace in mourning for General Wolfe, and "Wolfe's Dirge" is played daily on parade by some regimental bands in memory of this fine specimen of an English "officer and gentleman."

I shall touch but lightly on the war in America in 1775-1781, which was the unfortunate outcome of the delusion cherished by contemporary England that her colonies could be dragooned into contributing to taxation without either representation or corresponding advantage. It is not pleasant to dwell on that unhappy chapter of internecine strife, which commenced with the insignificant skirmish at Lexington, but assumed an entirely different character after the appointment, by the Congress of the "United Colonies," of Colonel Washington as Commander-in-Chief.

The battle of Bunker's Hill on June 17, 1775, was followed by a remodelling of the insurgent forces, which somewhat resembles the introduction of Cromwell's New Model, and which alone would have sufficed to give Washington a very high place in the ranks of military administrators. From a disorderly crowd of undisciplined militia he evolved a tolerable army which, with varying success, but ultimate triumph, was engaged at Brooklyn in 1776 and at Germanstown in 1777, where English discipline prevailed; in forcing the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga; in a sturdy struggle in Carolina and Virginia in 1780-81; and in the final scene at Yorktown on October 18, 1781, when Cornwallis surrendered to the combined American and French troops, and when, as a last display of professional arrogance, the English officers, marching out "with the honours of war" between the enemy's lines, saluted punctiliously all the French officers as belonging to a regular army, but refused any acknowledgment of the Americans!

The lessons to be derived from this great conflict are mainly political and social, not military ones. The military interest chiefly relates to examples of the maintenance of discipline on the one side, and the exhibition of a persistent devotion to a set object on the other, such as have been sufficiently apparent at other stages of British and American history to preclude the necessity of emphasising them in this instance. The best legacy of the war in America in a military sense is the esteem in which the fighting men of the two great nations concerned hold

one another, and the manner in which respect and not bitter feeling has been evolved even from episodes such as Saratoga, Yorktown, and Bunker's Hill.

## CHAPTER VI.

### EARLY FIGHTING DAYS IN INDIA.

THE history of the rise of the British rule in India forms one of the most inspiring chapters in all our military annals. Needless to say, in that chapter the Army plays a bright and distinguished part, but not perhaps so much so in the earliest stages as later, when the struggle for supremacy, as contrasted with the struggle for existence, became more sharply defined. The first European settlers in India were the Portuguese, followed by the Dutch, with whom we ourselves had subsequently to bring matters to a clear issue. Indeed, it was not until the latter half of the eighteenth century that the English succeeded in driving the Dutch from their principal Indian settlement of Chinsurah. Meanwhile the French had obtained a footing in India, although, for a hundred and fifty years after the foundation of the first French East India Company *in 1604*, the French made little real impression in either a military or commercial sense in the East.

Our own first settlements were on the Madras coast in 1611, and on the coast of Bombay from 1612 to 1615. The English settlements in Bengal

were of later date; the factory at Hughly not being established till 1640. This particular factory is of extreme historical interest, since the foundation of it led to the establishment of a settlement of infinitely greater importance. In 1686 a Nawab of Bengal issued an order confiscating the existing English factories, and the Hughly merchants, led by their president, Job Charnock, retreated some twenty-six miles down the river, where they laid the foundations of the original Fort William. The early history of these settlements is an interesting tale of British persistence against circumstances usually of great discouragement, and sometimes of serious peril. Planted amid a native population liable to sudden bursts of hostility, the merchants found it difficult at times to secure their own protection; but they were of the right English sort, and persevered steadily until their footing in the country was one of great commercial importance and, so far as purely defensive measures went, of some military stability.

Until 1700 the only regular British troops employed in India were those comprising the garrison sent to take possession of Bombay, which had become British by the marriage treaty of Charles II. with Catherine of Braganza. This formed the nucleus of a regiment which is still to be found in our Army List as the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. The title *Primus in Indis* is, however, held by the 39th, now the 1st Dorsetshire, which was despatched in 1754 to hold Madras. In 1708 the various trading companies connected with India coalesced, form-

ing the East India Company, the history of which is of itself a voluminous, and in most respects a brilliant record. In 1744 the English in India came into conflict with the French, who were represented by a man of very marked ability and equally marked ambition, Dupleix. In 1744 the war of the Austrian Succession supplied Dupleix and another eminent Frenchman, Labourdonnais, who was Governor at Mauritius, with an opportunity of displaying active hostility towards the English. Labourdonnais sailed from Mauritius and captured Madras, but was induced to withdraw by Dupleix, who was not the man to tolerate such an important rival. For a time Dupleix's supremacy was almost unquestioned, but in 1752 he found himself compelled to acknowledge that an even greater genius than his, that of Robert Clive, was in the ascendant. In 1753 Clive went to England, returning in 1756 as Governor of Fort St David. On the day of Clive's arrival at Madras, Surajah Dowlah, Nawab of Bengal, had captured the English settlement at Calcutta, including Fort William, subsequently crowding his wretched prisoners into the narrow chamber known to history as the "Black Hole." When the news of this event reached Madras, Clive was appointed to the command of an expedition with the object of punishing Surajah Dowlah. There was a squadron of the King's ships under Admiral Watson at Madras at the time, and in this Clive sailed with as many troops as he could get together, and recaptured Calcutta. Subsequently, he took advantage of the renewal of

war with France in Europe to attack the French settlement at Chandanagor, and this brought him in conflict with a combination between the French and Surajah Dowlah. The opposing forces met at the grove of Plassy, about 70 miles north of Calcutta, where Clive, with about 1000 Europeans, 2000 Sepoys, eight 6-pounders and two howitzers, met Surajah Dowlah with 35,000 foot, 15,000 horse and fifty cannon. From a tactical standpoint the battle is rather bewildering, but it terminated in the dispersal of the Nawab's troops in a panic, and Clive found that he had won a great victory with a loss of only 70 men. This smashed the French power in Bengal, and in 1760 it suffered a further crushing blow in Madras at the hands of Colonel Coote at the battle of Wandewash. Later, Surajah Dowlah, in 1764, was terribly defeated at Buxar, near Patna, by Major, afterwards Sir Hector, Munro.

In 1780 we had to reckon with Hyder Ali, who defeated Colonel Bailey at Congeveram and attacked Madras, but was finally crushed by Sir Eyre Coote, the victor of Wandewash. Hyder Ali's son, Tippoo Sultan of Mysore, gave us an infinity of trouble, largely by reason of the fact that French officers and adventurers had come out to India and lent assistance in drilling the native troops of our enemies. But early in 1797 there had arrived in India in command of the 33rd foot an officer who was destined to play a mighty part, not only against Mysore, but against the formidable Mahrattas who were becoming the real masters of India. In 1799 a

move was made against Tippoo Sultan's capital, Seringapatam, which was taken by assault on May 7th, largely through the gallant efforts of Major-General, afterwards Sir David, Baird, who was in command, the reserve in the trenches being placed in charge of Colonel Wellesley.

At the storming at Seringapatam, the 12th, 33rd, 73rd, 74th and 75th Foot were actively represented, while in a force which co-operated was included the old 103rd. It was a night attack, and a brave resistance was made, Tippoo himself being killed in one of the gateways, where his dead body was found, and subjected to indignities by no means creditable to the British officers concerned.

After a brief but important spell of military administration, Wellesley, in 1803, was employed with General, afterwards Lord, Lake in crushing the Mahrattas in the Deccan, and Scindia in Hindustan. In September of that year, Wellesley, having moved up from Seringapatam and captured Ahmednagar, made arrangements with Colonel Stevenson, who was in charge of a contingent of Deccan native troops, to attack the united forces of Scindia and the Rajah of Berar. Owing to defective information a concentration which had been contemplated failed, and on September 23rd, Wellesley found himself alone, with only 1500 British, and about 6500 native soldiers and 17 guns, opposed to a Mahratta army 50,000 strong, which was strongly posted behind the river Kaitna, with its left supported by the village of Assaye, and its front defended by 128 guns. The result is best described in

the words of Tennyson, who, in his splendid Funeral Ode, describes Wellington as having with

> "Myriads at Assaye
> Clashed with his fiery few and won."

The final charge which made Wellesley master of the enemy's artillery was undertaken by the General in person, at the head of the 78th regiment and the 7th native cavalry. The loss on the British side was extremely heavy, and in the 74th Highlanders every officer was either killed or wounded. The victory, however, was complete, 2000 of the enemy being killed, and 98 guns captured. Later, on November 29th, Wellesley met the Mahrattas again at Argaum, where once more he beat them handsomely, and with much smaller loss to his own side. This led to the capture of the important fortress of Gawilgurh, where 52 guns and 2000 English muskets fell into the hands of the English column.

Meanwhile, Lord Lake had been equally successful further north, having won important battles at Alighur and Laswari, and captured the cities of Delhi and Agra. These successes were qualified by some subsequent misfortunes, including the disastrous retreat of Colonel Monson through Central India in 1804, and the initial repulse of Lake in 1805 at the great mud fortress of Bhurtpore, which was not finally taken until 1827. But the foundations of British supremacy had been firmly laid, and the organisation of the military forces of the Company, supplemented by those of the Crown, proceeded on broad lines

which, although proved to have been defective by the great Sepoy Revolt of 1857, were still productive of some very splendid results, and some very notable deeds of heroism and soldierliness.

# SECTION IV.

## CHAPTER I.

### A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

It is difficult for the average man to realise the exact condition of the British Army at any specified period, if only for the reason that the conditions of military life are altogether exceptional. They depend, in the first instance, upon disciplinary and other restrictions which only those who have been subjected to them can understand properly, and which prevent almost completely those developments that render the growth of the civilian community so interesting and instructive. The almost habitual detachment of the Army from the social and political phases through which the country has passed at various epochs in our history is quaint, but not at all surprising. It is curious that, while the great heart of the people should be throbbing with passion, only needing a proper outlet to produce a dynastic upheaval, or lead to some great constitutional reform, the Army should be going about its daily business, brightening up its buckles and buttons for parade, grumbling at the quality of its rations, and, if called upon to do so, firing upon "the mob" with the impassive-

ness born of discipline, and sometimes of a dull ignorance of the points at issue. But, after all, this attitude is a natural survival of the traditional position of the Army as the King's own personal bodyguard, and if at times that attitude has been unworthily exemplified, and the soldier has helped to stifle the righteous aspirations of the citizen, it will be admitted that almost anything is better than an army which goes to the opposite extreme and mixes itself up, as the army of Cromwell in its later stages did, with political affairs.

Certainly at the opening of the nineteenth century the soldier troubled himself very little about anything outside his own profession and daily life. Here and there we see officers with political ambitions. Wellington himself represented Rye in Parliament, and for a time was Chief Secretary for Ireland. But, generally speaking, those who held commissions were chiefly occupied either in fighting or amusement, or in endeavouring to secure advancement by backstairs and other influence, sometimes of a very discreditable sort. The openness with which the traffic in promotions was carried out by the notorious Mrs Clarke is painfully adequate evidence of the loose state of things which existed in this respect among the higher ranks of the Army. For the rest, the officer of the time was, as a rule, but a poor specimen, when judged by any ordinary standard of professional ability or gentlemanly conduct. On duty he was a foul-mouthed, bigoted, and ignorant stickler for petty niceties of dress and deportment. Off duty he drank heavily, gambled, and behaved altogether

in a manner almost inconceivable to those with latter-day ideas of what constitutes "an officer and a gentleman." Of course there were brilliant exceptions; but there is no manner of doubt that the great majority of those who held commissions under George III. were as dissolute as their means permitted, and as indolent and ignorant as was possible under commanding officers selected, as a rule, by sheer favouritism, Court influence, or by means of downright corruption.

The private soldier has always been to some extent, though by no means entirely, what his officers have made him, and this received marked illustration in the condition of the ranks at this period. In the first place, the raw material was generally of the worst. The very scum of the population was drawn into the Service, and it was only by an iron discipline and a barbarous code of punishment that anything like order would have been possible in nine out of ten ordinary corps. A certain amount of decent material did find its way into the Army, slack although the system was. Prior to 1783, when a regiment had fallen below its strength and considerable numbers of recruits were required, an officer and a small recruiting party were sent down to some country district with a bag of money, and, by dint of lavish promises and liberal expenditure in the way of treating, a number of honest rustics were induced to enter the ranks; and these may have served to leaven partially a mass which would otherwise have been hopelessly evil from the moral standpoint. But the sons of the soil certainly did not constitute the backbone of our

Army, and by far the greater part of the older privates and non-commissioned officers must have been about as bad as a vile origin and a still viler upbringing and early life could make them. The contract of engagement was generally for life, and it was only natural that a man taken from the criminal and vagabond classes, who had adopted the Army as a means of subsistence for the rest of his days, should attach very little importance to ideas of military honour or regimental tradition.

Military barracks date from 1792, but the earlier specimens were certainly very doubtful institutions from a sanitary or any other decent standpoint. The soldier was wretchedly fed—so wretchedly, in fact, that the doctors complained that the men's physique deteriorated in consequence. William Cobbett, the political writer, who served for some years as a private soldier at the end of the eighteenth century, tells a story of his having with great difficulty saved a halfpenny, with which he intended on a certain morning to provide himself with a red herring for breakfast. He describes his anguish at finding the halfpenny stolen, and declares that he was so overcome by this calamity that he burst into tears.

Cobbett had a great deal to say, too, about the general administration of the regimental system. He himself never succeeded in proving completely the charges he brought against his officers for wilful misappropriation of regimental funds; but there is very little question that a good deal of improper manipulation of accounts and rendering of false returns went on.

What marked the Army very evilly at this period was the almost penal character of the Service. The ill-treatment to which the individual soldier was subjected at the hands of tyrannical officers and sergeants was quite dreadful. Constantly on parade canes were used freely by the former to correct the most trifling errors of dress, and the practice of allowing even sergeants to carry rattans rendered the private's life a continual misery. For graver offences the scale of punishment was terribly severe. Regimentally the system of running the gauntlet was practised, an offender having to pass between two ranks, every man of which gave him a blow as he passed with knotted whipcord — a system which has found a strange survival in the latter-day practice of some public schools. Flogging was carried out on a wholesale scale, sentences of 300 to 500 lashes being common; while for desertion, which very naturally was the principal crime in those days, 2000 lashes could be inflicted. So lately as 1825 a man was sentenced to 1900 lashes and received 1200, but in 1838 it was ruled that no corporal punishment should exceed 200 lashes.

It is small wonder that a system such as this should have gone far to brutalise even the better elements of a badly constituted army. Draconian codes will always produce, temporarily at least, a semblance of order and discipline, and it is quite possible that many regiments at this time may have passed as models of good behaviour and sustained decorum. The incidental fact that the private soldier had little or nothing

to spend may have contributed to his maintenance of an apparent self-restraint, while his comparative unpopularity with the civilian community rendered him much less an object of friendly attentions and liberality in the way of free drinks than he is to-day. But the system was rotten at the core, and it only needed the pressure of exceptional circumstances to lay bare the festering corruption around which the outer covering of show was wrapped. In the stress of such great operations as those in the Peninsula, the soldier worked magnificently, but there were times—lurid times—when, for a short space, he threw off all restraint, and showed himself even more full of debasement and vile passions than might have been supposed from his birth and breeding. After the storming of Badajos the excesses committed by the British soldier were so frightful as to make us sincerely ashamed that such a darkly-blotted page should exist in the annals of the British Army. But the system of brutal repression was far more to be blamed than the individual soldier. And here, as elsewhere in the Army's history, is but an illustration of the old Latin maxim that, even if you turn out Nature with a pitch-fork, she insists upon coming back.

It is simply amazing that under such conditions Wellington could have produced an army fit to cope with that of Napoleon. How was it done? The answer clearly is that the national character supplied the deficiencies, and that, steeped in absurdity and wrong-headedness as our military system was, it had the redeeming advantage of being mixed with English blood and brains, and

that these were sufficient to pull it through. The army to be redeemed was in many ways a worse one than that which Cromwell elevated by means of the New Model into an organisation which, so far as it went, answered all contemporary purposes and something more. The process of improvement under Wellington was much the same, but it is not altogether to Wellington's ability as a disciplinarian and an administrator that the good results are to be attributed. Drill and discipline can do much—the evolution of the Egyptian soldier in later days is a marvellous illustration of this—but it is the British national character which in Wellington's time, as before and since, was the real root of Britain's military success, and no one knew better than Wellington that such was the case, and no one knew better how to turn the fact to the best advantage.

## CHAPTER II.

### WELLINGTON AND THE PENINSULAR WAR.

As in the case of Marlborough, it is out of the question here to do justice, even of the roughest sort, to the career of Wellington after his return from India, to the war in the Peninsula, and to the campaign of Waterloo. All that will be possible will be to attempt to preserve some coherence in the narrative in which these mighty happenings are included, and incidentally to point out one or two salient features in which the campaigns under allusion indicate military progress, or special developments, or Wellington's

extraordinary genius as a commander. For details the reader has an easily accessible mine of information in Napier's "History," which is now being supplemented in many important respects by another monumental work, the first volume of which has recently appeared, by Mr C. W. Oman, the well-known author of the standard "History of War."

For the purpose of this story it is sufficient to say that in 1808 the British Government determined to take strong measures to resist an act of aggression with which Napoleon had crowned an extraordinary period of European conquest. Napoleon had seized Spain, and proclaimed Joseph Buonaparte king of that country. In the beginning of 1808, Junot, one of Napoleon's most dashing, but by no means most competent generals, had invaded Portugal and signalised his occupation of that country by measures of great oppression accentuated by the rapacity of his troops. Wellesley was accordingly dispatched to Mondego Bay on the coast of Portugal, where he landed in August, having under him about 13,000 troops all told, of which less than 500 were cavalry.

Of Wellesley's previous Indian career a slight sketch has already been given, to which it may usefully be added here that the future Great Duke was born in 1769, the third son of the Earl of Mornington, and that he had entered the army as an Ensign of the 73rd Foot at the age of eighteen. He had seen service in Flanders under the Duke of York before he sailed to India in command of the 33rd Regiment, and after his

Indian campaigns had been created a K.C.B. and had entered upon a short Parliamentary career, which, as we shall see, was to undergo very satisfactory interruption. A contemporary sneer marks him as having at this time secured a reputation merely as a "Sepoy General"; but the truth is that, by the time he had completed, at the age of thirty-six, his Indian service, he was a thoroughly accomplished and scientific soldier, capable and experienced in the art of independent command, and greatly skilled in the conduct of political as well as of military operations. In the combined naval and military expedition despatched to Denmark in 1807, Wellesley had commanded the troops, and had defeated the Danes at Kioge on 19th August. When, therefore, he landed in Portugal, he had every reason to be confident in his own ability as a soldier and a leader, although it must rapidly have been evident to him that he would suffer greatly from lack of support at home, and from the inefficient co-operation of his allies in the field. Of the latter drawback he had an early experience, since he had been led to believe that on landing in Portugal 6000 Portuguese would join him, but of these he only obtained 1400 infantry and 250 cavalry.

Junot, at Lisbon, hearing of the landing of the British expedition, advanced to meet it, at the same time ordering his subordinates in other parts of Portugal to converge, in the hope of driving the British into the sea. By skilful strategy Wellesley severed the lines of communication of the forces under Laborde and

Loisson, who were advancing towards Leiria, and forced Laborde to fight the battle of Rolica.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

Here the French were beaten, but the effect of the defeat was minimised by the skilful retire-

ment of Laborde, who took every advantage of the British weakness in cavalry. August 20th found Wellington bivouacked at Vimiera, a village situated near the sea coast in the Maceira valley. The position was only a temporary one, but had been well chosen. It lay for about a mile and a half along a range of hills a mile in front of the village. The centre was posted on a rugged, isolated height, directly in front of the village; the right rested on hills, which swept in a half circle from the village to the sea coast; and the left, which was composed of a few pickets, occupied other rising ground extended from the opposite side of the village.

At midnight, on the 20th, Wellesley heard that Junot was advancing with 20,000 men, and was then only a few miles distant. At eight o'clock on the morning of the 21st, Junot appeared with three divisions led by Laborde, Loisson and Kellerman, and with 1600 cavalry under Margaron. As Junot clearly intended to attack the British centre and left, Wellesley, with masterly promptitude, withdrew four brigades from his right, and transferring them to his left, beat back the French attack with the loss to the enemy of 3000 killed and wounded, and thirteen guns. This was achieved in only two or three hours of fighting, and, in the opinion of the writer, must be classed as quite one of the most important of the Peninsula battles, if only for the reason that it gave the British troops confidence, and was the first important check with which Napoleon met at the hands of his great rival.

At this juncture Wellesley was superseded by

Sir Hew Dalrymple, and the unsatisfactory "Convention of Cintra" followed, Wellesley returning home with Dalrymple to answer for the conditions of that treaty, of which he himself had strongly disapproved, before a Court of Inquiry.

Meanwhile the command in Portugal had devolved upon that fine soldier and noble gentleman, Sir John Moore, who had previously distinguished himself under Sir Ralph Abercromby in Egypt and Holland. Napoleon had collected an enormous army to re-conquer Spain, and as he was sweeping down from the Pyrenees upon Madrid, Moore with, comparatively speaking, a mere handful of 30,000 men, struck with splendid boldness at his line of communication with France. He thereby drew upon himself the invading forces, and was compelled to fall back on Corunna, pursued by Soult, to whom Napoleon, recalled to France by the war preparations of Austria, had left the conduct of the campaign. Moore conducted his retreat with consummate skill, covering his embarkation at Corunna with an action in which he defeated and drove back the enemy, but was himself killed in the moment of victory. The ships which brought the expedition back to England suffered heavily from a severe storm, and, to use the words of a well-known and able critic, "Apparent failure never so completely concealed a marvellous achievement."

In April 1809 Wellesley once more landed in Portugal, the north of which had been invaded by Soult; while Victor, in the south, lay at Merida. Concentrating at Coimbra, Wellesley

attacked Soult's troops on the south of the Douro on May 11th, forcing the passage of the river the next morning, and cutting off Soult so effectually from all roads of retreat that he had to abandon guns and baggage, and effect the escape of his men by mountain paths. Turning his attention to Victor, he was attacked by that General and by Sebastiani at the end of July at Talavera, and bloodily repulsed the enemy, with the very inefficient co-operation of the Spaniards.

Foreseeing that the immense reinforcements which Napoleon was pouring over the Pyrenees into Spain would, for some time to come, place him in a condition of serious inferiority, Wellington had, by October 1809, decided upon the construction of the gigantic entrenched camp known to history as the lines of Torres Vedras. Pursued by Massena in September 1810, Wellington withdrew behind his marvellous defences, having previously inflicted a serious check on Reynier and Ney at Busaco. Issuing forth from the lines of Torres Vedras in the spring of 1811, Wellington beat the French at Fuentes d'Onoro on May 3rd, and on May 16th Beresford inflicted on Soult a sanguinary defeat at Albuera, "the bloodiest, and, for the soldiery, most glorious field of the war." In January 1812 Ciudad Rodrigo was taken by storm, and early in April Badajos was similarly captured, many British lives being sacrificed in these attempts, and sad discredit brought on the British Army by the excesses committed by the soldiers, in the flush of their sanguinary triumph. On July 23rd, Wellington caught Marmont at Salamanca in the

middle of a movement which left one of his wings in temporary isolation. With his usual rapid grasp of the situation Wellington seized the opportunity, destroyed the isolated left wing, and would have annihilated the remainder of the force, had not the Spaniards abandoned an important ford without informing Wellington, and thus given the French a chance of escape. After Salamanca Wellington entered Madrid in triumph, and, in May 1813, he advanced upon Vittoria, where, on June 21st, he inflicted a conclusive defeat upon the army of Joseph Buonaparte.

The autumn of 1813 was occupied by operations in the Pyrenees, in which Wellington had to cope with Napoleon's most skilful General, Marshal Soult. In February 1814 Wellington succeeded in beating Soult heavily at Orthes, subsequently following him to Toulouse, and again defeating him on April 10th in the final battle of the war.

Throughout the operations in the Peninsula, Wellington was terribly hampered by a want of money, and in many instances his apparent failure to make the most of his victories was due to the extreme difficulty he experienced in moving his army through a country which had already been completely gutted of its supplies by the enemy. It was a remarkable saying of Wellington's that he might or might not be a great general, but of one thing he was quite certain, and that was that he was an excellent commissariat officer. To his ability in this respect much of his success in the face of apparently

insurmountable obstacles was undoubtedly due. But this alone would not of course account for such a grand succession of victories as those which marked his victorious career in Portugal and Spain. For a combination of caution with vigour, coolness, and almost preternatural sagacity, Wellington stands unrivalled, and no stronger tribute to his military genius could be found than lies in the fact that his campaigns and despatches are still standards to the military student, and have lost little of their extraordinary value in the changes and chances of latter-day warfare. In the Peninsula he was at first almost habitually compelled to act on the defensive, owing to his inferior forces, but he was a master of the art of counter-stroke, and time after time succeeded, where others might have failed, by getting the utmost out of his troops at the supreme moment. What he accomplished he accomplished by sheer military genius, for he was but scantily assisted by the exercise of any personal influence, other than that of respect or fear, over the very mixed body of officers and men that he commanded with such amazing and unvarying success.

## CHAPTER III.

### WATERLOO.

THE war in the Peninsula is of such magnitude and absorbing interest that it is disagreeable to be compelled to interpose between it and the campaign of Waterloo any reference to such an

expedition as that to Walcheren in 1809. But a glance at this event is desirable, if only by way of indicating that the British arms at this time were by no means uniformly victorious, and that such failure as occurred was a natural accompaniment of the condition of inefficiency and ineptitude to which reference was made in the opening chapter of this section, and which Wellington's personal influence was by no means sufficient completely to remove. As a matter of fact the expedition to Walcheren was hardly a solitary instance of our misfortunes during this period. It had been preceded in 1807 by the disastrous expedition to Buenos Ayres, in which General Whitelocke behaved so scandalously as to bring upon himself a Court-Martial, with the result that he was cashiered, and his name became a by-word of military reproach. But Walcheren, 1809, was on a much larger scale than this, and the record of it is the more exasperating in that with greater energy a real success might have been obtained, and an important object accomplished.

In 1809 there was war between France and Austria, and the idea of the British Government was to create a diversion in favour of the latter by capturing Flushing and Antwerp, then garrisoned by the French, and subsequently to render the Scheldt unnavigable by ships of war. A combined naval and military expedition, the largest and most complete that had ever left our shores, was despatched under the command of Admiral Sir Richard Strachan and the Earl of Chatham, the latter being selected for the leader-

ship of the land force purely on account of Court favour. The expedition consisted of no fewer than 245 vessels of war, accompanied by about 400 transports, carrying nearly 40,000 men. Flushing, after a tremendous bombardment, surrendered on August 16th. Then, through the amazing indolence of Lord Chatham, a fortnight's delay occurred, during which the French succeeded in throwing a number of additional troops into Antwerp, and in strengthening the fortifications of the Scheldt. On August 30th the enemy took the offensive, and the English fleet was forced to retire from its advanced position. In the middle of September the Earl of Chatham left for England with a portion of the army, leaving a feeble remnant in occupation of the Isle of Walcheren. Here the men soon began to die from malaria at the rate of 200 a week, and eventually the place was abandoned after an expenditure of nearly 10,000 lives and twenty millions of money.

The sting of the Walcheren failure largely disappeared under the soothing influence of Wellington's Peninsula victories. These, again, had a rapid and glorious sequel in that tremendous landmark in the world's history, the campaign of Waterloo. Early in 1815 Europe was in a distinctly unsettled state, and it is very possible that in any case warlike happenings would have occurred, when, in March, Europe found itself confronted by a danger which rapidly brought its conflicting atoms into harmonious conjunction against a common enemy. Napoleon had escaped from Elba, which had been assigned to him after

his abdication by the peace of 1814, and had entered Paris on the crest of a wave of military revolution. At the Congress of Vienna the four great Powers declared Napoleon an enemy to all; and, while Russian, Austrian, and other troops were moving towards the Rhine, a mixed force of British, Dutch, Belgians, Hanoverians, and other nationalities was hastily collected in Belgium, with a view to its co-operation under Wellington with the Prussian Army under Prince Blucher.

Even the British section of this mixed force was eminently unsatisfactory, since it contained very few Peninsula veterans, and was largely made up of recruits from the Militia. It is noticeable that here for the first time we find a British Army organised in Army Corps, one corps being for the purposes of this campaign placed under Lord Hill, the other under the Prince of Orange. Wellington's headquarters were at Brussels, and his troops were quartered in cantonments extending from the Scheldt on the right to the Quatre Bras-Brussels road on the left. Connected with Wellington's left along the Quatre Bras-Brussels road was the right of the Prussian Army, which was distributed in four great corps, Ziethen's with its headquarters at Charleroi, Pirch's at Namur, Thielmann's at Ciney, Bülow's at Liège.

While Wellington and Blucher were awaiting the concentration of the Russian and other Allied Forces towards the Rhine, Napoleon, by a masterly movement, succeeded in gathering an army of nearly 130,000 men in the neighbourhood of Charleroi, and on June 15th he attacked the Prussian outposts at that place. Pushing aside

such of Ziethen's corps as he encountered, he passed on through Charleroi, subsequently despatching Ney along the Brussels road. The latter drove in the Allied outposts at Frasne, and the news of this attack was brought to Wellington just before he set out for the Duchess of Richmond's historic ball at Brussels.

The following day, June 16, was full of momentous action. Napoleon divided his whole army into two wings; the right commanded by Gruchy, and the left by Ney. The first operated against Blucher at Ligny, and inflicted on the latter a considerable, but not crushing blow. Ney, on the other hand, although he should have had at his disposal eight divisions wherewith to attack Quatre Bras, was only able to employ three, with the result that, although he attacked repeatedly, and with great gallantry, the British held their ground.

On June 17th Napoleon sent Gruchy to pursue the Prussians who had fallen back after their defeat at Ligny, and himself moved to attack Quatre Bras. From this, however, Wellington had withdrawn his force to Waterloo. It is said that on the night of the 17th Wellington rode personally over to Blucher's headquarters at Wavre, and obtained from him a specific promise that, come what might, he would support him on the following day.

On the morning of the 18th the total of the Allied troops at Waterloo was 67,671, including 156 guns and 12,632 cavalry. The French numbered 71,947, of whom 15,765 were cavalry, and they had 246 guns. The battle was commenced

a little before noon by an attack, from Napoleon's left, on the fortified farmhouse of Hougomont by Reille, followed by a movement against the English centre by D'Erlon's corps, both of which were heavily repulsed. Before 3 P.M. Napoleon left the operations against Wellington's army to Ney, and prepared to stem the advance of the Prussians under Bülow on his right. His hope was that, with Gruchy's help, he would catch the Prussians between two fires, but Gruchy had lost touch with him, and his failure to co-operate at this juncture probably altered the entire complexion of the fight.

At 4 P.M. La Haye Sainte, a fortified farmhouse on Wellington's left centre, was captured by Ney, a success which was followed by a premature advance of the French horse, as if in pursuit of a broken enemy. This advance, however, was rudely checked by the solid British squares formed "to receive cavalry."

Throughout the battle Wellington was constantly in evidence, noting all the weak places in his own line, and, wherever possible, supplying deficiencies with his usual promptitude and absence of anything like fuss or flurry. It is pretty certain that at one or two stages of the battle he felt some misgiving, but throughout his bearing was magnificently cool and collected. "In the midst of danger," writes Lord William Lennox, who served as one of his aides-de-camp, "bullets whistling close about him, round shot ploughing the ground he occupied, and men and horses falling on every side, he sat upon his favourite charger Copenhagen as collectedly as if he had

been reviewing Household Troops in Hyde Park."

The culminating point of this terrible conflict was reached about seven in the evening, when Napoleon threw eight battalions of his Guards—all that were now available out of twenty-four, into a final attack. This impressive advance was met in front and on the extreme flank by the British Guards and by Adam's Brigade respectively; and the disorder into which the enemy were thrown by this vigorous repulse was accentuated by the appearance of the Prussian van at the farm of Papelotte, and its speedy engagement with the right flank of D'Erlon's corps. Wellington's opportunity had now arrived, after hours of weary waiting to see, as he himself put it, which side could stand pounding the longest, and he now gave the order for a general advance. The French Army broke before the triumphant onset, and their rout continued far into the night, Wellington handing over the pursuit to the Prussians at 11 P.M. in Genappe. Napoleon fled from the field only to abdicate a second time, and to be sent as a State prisoner to St Helena. The Allies advanced upon Paris, and Wellington remained Generalissimo of the combined army, 150,000 strong, which they maintained in France till an evacuation was arranged at the Congress of Cambrai in 1818.

One could not have hoped in the limited space here available to give any but the barest outline of such a struggle as this, involving a plethora of incidents, apart from the sustained grandeur of so vast a battle-field in which the destinies of the

world were literally at stake. Many volumes have been written round the battle, from many different standpoints, and to the most accessible of these the writer would fain make reference, not so much by way of excusing his own jejune performance, as by way of providing the earnest reader with a succinct and dependable narrative, wholly beyond the scope of the present "story." One such book is "Wellington and Waterloo," by Major Arthur Griffiths (Newnes), which has the advantage of being very profusely and beautifully illustrated. Another is an admirable *brochure* entitled "The Story of Waterloo," by Colonel H. D. Hutchinson (Gale & Polden).

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE CRIMEAN WAR.

BETWEEN the battle of Waterloo and the war in the Crimea there was a long period of military inactivity so far as the home army was concerned, although in the East, as will be briefly noted in the next chapter, there were considerable warlike developments from trouble in Burma and Afghanistan, and with the Sikhs. Passing to 1854, some eighteen months after the death of the Duke of Wellington, we find Russia and Turkey at war; the latter having already sustained a naval disaster at Sinope in November 1853. England and France had interested themselves, and with good reason, in the quarrel, and in February 1854 the diplomatic relations between

Russia and the two Allied Powers were broken off, and war was declared.

In the first instance, the command of the English forces was given to Lord Raglan, formerly Lord Fitzroy Somerset, who had lost his right arm serving under Wellington at Waterloo, and had previously done good service in the Peninsula. That of the French troops was given to Marshal St Arnaud. Both commanders died in the course of the campaign, Raglan being succeeded by General Simpson; Arnaud by General Canrobert, who resigned in favour of General Pelissier. Having previously assembled at Varna, the allied forces were conveyed to the south-west shore of the Crimea, and landed in Kalamita Bay, about thirty miles to the north of Sebastopol. The disembarkation was commenced on December 14th, 1854. In all, the British mustered 26,000 men and 54 guns, the French 24,000 men and about 70 guns. With the Allies were about 4500 Turks with neither cavalry nor guns. The disembarkation was covered by the presence of warships of both nations, the steamers among which introduced a new feature which had an important bearing upon the earlier dispositions and movements of the land forces.

The Allies, on September 20th, having marched out of their encampments on the previous day, came to the Alma, and found that they had to cross the river under fire from the Russian artillery and infantry posted on the opposing banks. Notwithstanding a stubborn resistance on the part of the Russians under command of Prince Mentschikoff, the Allies crossed the river and won the heights,

driving the Russians from the field and occupying their positions.

While the Allies halted at the Alma, the Russians blocked the harbour of Sebastopol, and so frustrated any idea of a sudden combined movement by land and sea. The Allies went accordingly round to Balaclava, which lies to the south of Sebastopol, a manœuvre only rendered possible, as Hamley remarks, by the introduction of steam. On October 17th the bombardment of Sebastopol was commenced; one hundred and twenty-six pieces, many of them of the largest calibre, opening fire at daylight, and being answered by a still larger number of equal range and power. The siege of Sebastopol lasted until September 8th of the following year, and, in the course of it, a very large proportion of the 24,000 men who were lost by England in the war were accounted for.

The limited space here available makes it impossible to follow the details of the siege, and to give at the same time even the sketchiest outline of the more important actions associated with it. But it is essential that some specific mention should be made of that memorable October 25th, when the Russians attempted to obtain possession of Balaclava, and were splendidly repulsed in an action rendered immortal by two of the greatest cavalry charges the world has ever seen. Of these, the charge of the Light Brigade was due to some misunderstanding of an order as to the movements of the Brigade, which in obedience to apparently peremptory and definite instructions were hurled in a futile effort against the whole Russian army. Shattered by fire from

their front and flank, the Brigade succeeded in reaching the enemy's guns and sabring the gunners, being eventually forced to retire in twos and threes with a loss of 10 officers and 147 men killed or missing, and 11 officers and 110 wounded, out of a total of 607. This extraordinary charge has been variously immortalised, but, from several standpoints, it cannot compare in interest with the charge of the Heavy Brigade which took place some hours earlier on the same morning, and which had the merit of being completely successful.

As the Russian attack on the morning of October 25th was being developed, eight squadrons of the Heavy Brigade, which, with the Light Brigade, were encamped to the left of the plain in front of Balaclava, were ordered to move off to the assistance of the 93rd Highlanders who were guarding the immediate approach to the British position. The Scots Greys and Inniskilling Dragoons were advancing under their Brigadier, General Scarlett, when suddenly they became aware of the presence of a huge mass of Russian cavalry, some 3000 strong, which had cleared the Turkish redoubts, and was slowly drawing down into the valley from the higher ground. By a magnificent inspiration Scarlett, who was an elderly officer of no particular distinction, shouted, "Left wheel into line!" and when his little force had been dressed, gave the word to advance, and dashed plump into the mass of Russian cavalry, which meanwhile had halted in indecision at a distance of only 400 yards. Scarlett himself, being finely mounted,

was the first to plunge into the enemy, but he was quickly followed by his two squadrons of Greys and one of Inniskillings, to whom the glory of this initial onslaught is due. Closing in on their assailants, the Russians must have crushed them by sheer weight of numbers, but happily there were others of the Heavy cavalry behind, who, seeing the Greys and Inniskillings engaged, dashed in after them in a little series of distinct and unrelated charges. On the British right there had been left behind a squadron of the Inniskillings, with orders to follow. These plunged into the Russian left wing, which they caught trying to wheel in on to Scarlett's leading squadrons. The 4th and 5th Dragoon Guards and the Royals also came up independently, and smote the Russians heavily, till the latter turned and fled confusedly back over the slopes.

On November 5th the Russians made another grand attack; the plateau of Inkerman, which at first was occupied only by the Guards and a few British regiments, being the principal scene of action. This wonderful "soldiers' battle" was fought in a dark mist, and on our part was indeed a confused and desperate struggle. Nothing but the most extraordinary valour on the part of the defenders, among whom, to quote an eye-witness, "every man was his own general," could have prevented a successful realisation of the Russian plan, in which overwhelming masses of infantry were to be pressed forward, after sweeping the field selected with a tremendous artillery fire. The battle lasted nine hours of close fight-

ing, and has been aptly described as a gloomy though a glorious triumph.

The siege of Sebastopol terminated with attacks upon the Malakoff and Redan, which would, of themselves, require pages of description to do them any justice. In the event the Russians abandoned the city, having previously set fire to it, with the result that, before the Allies could venture to enter it, the arsenals and powder magazines were exploded and flames were bursting out of all the public buildings and private houses.

After the fall of Sebastopol, the defence of Kars by Colonel Fenwick Williams provided another brilliant episode of the War, but the latter was virtually concluded on September 8th, and on March 30th, 1856, a treaty of peace was signed at the Congress of Paris.

Much of the real interest of the war in the Crimea is centred in the terrible privations suffered by our troops before Sebastopol, as the result of mismanagement and want of organisation at army headquarters, which, when revealed, aroused a storm of public indignation. The most ghastly errors were committed, the most shameful frauds perpetrated, while, owing to the utter want of system, even when stores and hospital necessaries were available at the front they were not brought into use. Some relief was afforded to this gloomy picture by the ministrations of Miss Florence Nightingale, who organised a trained staff of nurses, and so greatly lessened the unavoidable suffering in the hospitals at Scutari in the later stages of the war. Among later results

of Miss Nightingale's devoted endeavours were the Geneva Convention and the institution of the Red Cross.

## CHAPTER V.

### INDIAN DEVELOPMENTS.

AFTER the subjection of the Mahrattas by Wellesley and Lake, there ensued in India from 1807 to 1813 a short period of consolidation of conquest under Lord Minto, to which succeeded an era of pretty constant struggle, commencing with the troublesome Nepal War of 1814-15. The first campaign of 1814, against the warlike little Ghoorkhas, as the ruling race in the Nepal Valley are called, was unsuccessful; but late in the same year General Ochterlony compelled the Nepal *durbar* to sue for peace, and in the following year the same general marched up to Khatmandu, dictated terms which had formerly been rejected, and secured the withdrawal of the Ghoorkhas from a number of advanced posts, which have since become the British hill stations of Simla, Mussoorie, and Naini Tal.

In 1817 the depredations of the Pindaris led to the collection of a large force by Lord Hastings, which completely subjugated these Central India freebooters, whose forays had extended even to the Madras and Bombay coasts, and one of whose leaders, Amir Khan, had desolated Rajputana with an army of 30,000 men and several batteries

of guns. The same year saw a final effort of the Mahrattas to regain their old ascendancy. The three great Mahratta powers at Poona, Nagpur, and Indore rose separately, the first attacking Kirki, only to be barely repulsed; the second being splendidly held in check by the sepoys who defended the hill of Sitabaldi against enormous odds; while Sir John Malcolm finally accounted for Holkar of Indore at Mehidpur.

In 1824-6 the first Burmese War arose out of the persistent insolence of the Burmese emperor, and, after causing us terrible loss from disease and climate, added the provinces of Assam, Arakan, and Tenasserim to the British Empire.

In 1837 Lord Auckland made the grievous mistake of deciding to overthrow Dost Mahomed, the head of the great Barukzai family in Afghanistan, who had established himself as Amir, and to replace him by Shah Shuja, a prince of the former reigning family of Duranis. Dost Mahomed was put to flight and captured after a brave struggle, and for two years Afghanistan remained in the military occupation of the British. But Shah Shuja could not be made acceptable to the Afghans, and in November 1841 our political agent, Sir Alexander Burnes, was assassinated in Kabul. The murder of Sir William Macnaghten followed, and then the attempted withdrawal of the British Army of occupation, numbering 4000 fighting men with 12,000 followers. This force was attacked by the tribesmen in the passes, and only a single survivor, Dr Brydon, found his way back to Jelalabad. In 1842 two avenging armies, under Generals Pollock and Nott, after much

hard fighting, met at Kabul, blew up the bazaar, recovered the prisoners, and retired, leaving Dost Mahomed to resume possession of the throne.

In 1843, the Amirs, or Mahomedan rulers, of Sind, having proclaimed an obstinate independence, were crushed by 3000 British troops under Sir Charles Napier at Miani—a most brilliant feat of arms, having regard to the warlike character of the 20,000 Baluchis who were opposed to us. In the same year an outbreak of Sindia's army brought about the Gwalior campaign, and the British victories of Maharajpore and Punniar.

In 1845 the Khalsa, or central Council of the Sikh generals, which now controlled the independent Sikh kingdom founded by Runjit Singh in the Punjab, thought the moment a favourable one for attacking the British, and a Sikh army 60,000 strong, with 150 guns, crossed the Sutlej and invaded British territory. Accompanied by the Governor-General, Sir Henry, afterwards Lord, Hardinge, the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Gough, hurried up to the frontier, and after four battles in rapid succession, Moodki, Ferozeshah, Aliwal, and Sobraon, had been fought, the Sikhs were driven across the Sutlej, Lahore captured, and a partial British occupation arranged. In 1848 two British officers were treacherously assassinated at Multan, and a general Sikh rising followed. In January of the following year the British army under Gough attacked at Chillianwalah and lost 2400 officers and men, four guns, and the colours of three regiments. The home public was stirred to indignation at the tidings,

and Sir Charles Napier was sent out to supersede Gough. The latter, however, had meanwhile retrieved his reputation by completely smashing the Sikhs at Gujerat. The annexation and pacification of the Punjab followed, with the result that the Sikhs are now among the most loyal and trusted soldiers in the British Army.

In 1857 the dissatisfaction which a policy of annexation and other misunderstood measures had created among the natives of India found a tragic outlet in a military revolt. A rumour had run through the native army that the new cartridges served out to the Bengal army were greased with the fat of the pig—an animal unclean alike to Mahomedans and Hindoos. After various preliminary indications of the coming storm, which passed strangely unheeded by the authorities, the sepoys at Meerut on Sunday, May 10, broke into open mutiny and, unchecked by the British garrison, rushed off to Delhi to stir up the natives there, and to place themselves under the authority of the Moghul king, who was living in the palace, "a disestablished but not wholly disendowed sovereign." By some the whole revolt is traced to Moghul influence, but this is a question which is beyond the scope of this brief sketch. It is sufficient to say that in an incredibly short time the whole of Oudh, the North-West Provinces and Lower Bengal were aflame, the Punjab happily remaining not only quiet, but loyal, under the influence of Sir John Lawrence and his lieutenants, Herbert Edwardes and Nicholson. In Madras and Bombay, too, the native armies remained true to their colours, but in Central

India the troops of several states joined the rebels.

At Cawnpore the greatest tragedy of the Mutiny was enacted through the infamy of Nana Sahib, under whose orders two separate massacres took place, the later of women and children under circumstances so ghastly that in the grim work of repressing the revolt no more effective stimulus to the tired British soldier could be found than the terrible reminder, "Remember the women and children! Remember Cawnpore!"

Lucknow was subjected to a double siege. Sir Henry Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of Oudh, had on the outbreak of the Mutiny, provisioned and fortified the Residency, and on July 2 had retired into it with the European inhabitants and a weak British regiment. Here the little garrison, after almost immediately losing its gallant head, sustained a close siege till September 25, when Havelock and Outram arrived and in all probability saved the women and children from another massacre like that at Cawnpore. But the rebels still swarmed in the neighbourhood, and it was not until November 22 that the British garrison at Lucknow was finally relieved by the co-operation of Sir Colin Campbell, afterwards Lord Clyde, the moment of triumph being sadly marred by the death of Havelock from dysentery in the Alumbagh, four miles from the Residency, on November 24.

Meanwhile Delhi, which, after the proclamation of the restored Moghul dynasty, had become the most important centre of disaffection, had been attacked by a small British force, eventually about

8000 strong. The siege commenced on June 8, and in August reinforcements arrived from the Punjab under the gallant Nicholson. On September 14 the town was assaulted, and after six days' street fighting, in which Nicholson was killed, was finally won. A lurid sequel to the capture of the city was the death of two of the Emperor of Delhi's sons who had been taken prisoners and were being conveyed by Hodson, a famous leader of irregular horse, through a crowd which showed signs of pressing in on the escort. Snatching a carbine, Hodson shot both of the princes dead, overawing the populace, but bringing on himself considerable obloquy hardly silenced by his subsequent death. A wonderful leader of men, Hodson of "Hodson's Horse" was typical of many dashing and resolute officers whom the Mutiny shows to be in their element as commanders of Indian native cavalry, and from the irregular corps raised at this period by such men as Hodson, Cureton, Fane, Murray and others, have sprung several of the finest and most efficient regiments of the latter day Indian Army.

After the relief of Lucknow and the fall of Delhi a campaign was carried out by Sir Colin Campbell in Oude, and Sir Hugh Rose, afterwards Lord Strathnairn, conducted in Central India the remarkable pursuit of Tantia Topi, a native leader of extraordinary military talent, who was not finally run down till April 1859.

The Indian Mutiny is crowded with lessons, by some of which we have profited, notably in the matter of maintaining a larger proportion of

British to native troops. The events of the Mutiny itself are intensely stirring, and illustrate not only the splendid fighting capacity of the British soldiers, but also the amazing fortitude and endurance of small garrisons, often composed largely of civilians and women, in the presence of terrible privations and still more terrible possibilities. From a military standpoint, much interest is attached to the special strain laid upon the Engineers and Artillery, who responded nobly to the calls made upon them, and to whose scientific skill, unwearying toil, and personal gallantry, many of the greatest triumphs of the Mutiny are unquestionably due.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ORGANIC CHANGES.

In a previous chapter a rough outline was given of the shape of the Army a hundred years ago, and it is now convenient to trace briefly the progress made from the commencement of the nineteenth century up to the year 1881, when territorialisation finally became the basis of our military system. Into much that is interesting and important in the way of administrative development it is not possible to enter here, but the general lines of advance as regards more especially our system of organisation will be found broadly indicated in the following summary.

At the close of the first decade of the nineteenth century the Army consisted of, first,

the Regular, or Standing Army; secondly, the general Militia, a considerable portion of which was used on foreign service; and thirdly, the local Militia, introduced by Lord Castlereagh in 1808 as a reserve force, raised by ballot without substitute, for the defence of the kingdom. The general Militia also was obtained by ballot, but paid substitutes were allowed, it being on record that, in 1810, as much as £60 was given for a substitute, while in some cases men actually sold themselves into the military service at so much per pound of their weight. In 1811 the Militia system was modified, and recruiting was ordered to be by beat of drum and not by ballot. For the Standing Army recruits were obtained by offering a bounty and giving levy-money, and these two combined amounted, in 1810, to nearly £40. As a rule, engagement was for life, until 1808, when the recruit had the alternative offered to him of enlisting for a term or for life, the bounty in the former case being proportionately smaller. From 1829 to 1847 enlistment for life was again in vogue, but in the latter year finally gave way under the Army Service Act to enlistment for a term of years.

We kept up a notable establishment in those days, the figures for 1809 being 110,600 regulars abroad and 108,500 regulars in the United Kingdom, together with 65,000 militia. In 1813 the establishment was 255,428, but there was a deficiency of 24,959, and the standard was distinctly a low one. For general service in that year the standard of height was only 5 feet 3 inches,

or for young men of 17 years of age 5 feet, and men were admitted up to 40 years of age. At Waterloo many of the regiments consisted of the merest boys.

After the Great War the Army entered on a long period of peace, during which, to quote the "Army Book of the British Empire," the country was glad to be rid of military questions, and while chary of supplies, was content to leave military legislation to take care of itself. Except for the Army itself, with its glorious traditions, or because of these, we were left after all our experience but slenderly provided with permanent defensive institutions available for future need. There was no militia enrolled, local or general, no reserve of any kind, and the volunteers had disappeared.

From this unhappy state of things the Crimean war was a rude awakening, all the ruder by reason of the tragic losses occasioned by the ghastly want of system at army headquarters. But it was not only a defective system of army administration that had to be remedied. It was largely the lack of reserves indicated in the above quotation which constituted our military weakness, and which, in more exacting circumstances, might have proved almost fatal to England's greatness. During the war the want of soldiers was so severely felt that it actually became necessary to resort to the enlistment of a so-called "foreign legion," an expedient the necessity for which it is indeed to be hoped will never recur.

After the close of the Indian Mutiny campaign

in 1859 a period of transition commenced, which lasted until the close of the Franco-German war in 1871. During this period it became more and more forcibly borne in upon us that some system of reserves was absolutely necessary. The moral had been pointed, and sharply pointed, by the seven weeks' war of 1866, in which the Prussian success was obviously based upon something more than the possession of the new breech-loading rifle. The further lessons of 1870-71 brought this question still nearer home to us. Happily, in the meanwhile, a man had become Secretary of State for War in England who was fully competent to deal with the crisis which had arisen. From 1868-74 Mr Cardwell laid the British Army under an imperishable debt of gratitude by reforms which were not only great and far-reaching of themselves, and in their immediate effects, but were pregnant with still greater good to come.

To Mr Cardwell the Army owes first, the reorganisation of the War Office; secondly, the abolition of the system of purchasing commissions by officers; and thirdly, the complete recasting of our system of recruiting. The War Office was henceforth distributed under three great departments—military, control or supply, and financial—the military department having assigned to it not only a definite sphere of influence, but a definite responsibility to the Secretary of State. As regards the abolition of purchase, there can be no question that the evil which it remedied had grown to very serious dimensions. The Army, in the words of Mr Cardwell, was "in

pledge" to the officers, and money considerations were allowed to rank scandalously before those of merit and efficiency. But far more important than either of these reforms was the upheaval caused by Mr Cardwell's introduction of the Enlistment Act of 1870, under which the present short service system, with its effective reserve, was distinctly foreshadowed.

In 1872 Mr Cardwell's initial efforts were crystallised in a system of organisation in which two line battalions were connected for recruiting purposes with each one of a number of territorial districts; with these districts were associated the militia battalions and volunteers of the locality, and the combinations of line, with militia battalions, and with volunteers pertaining to each district, were allotted to brigade depôts or centres. It was a cardinal feature of this system that one line battalion should be abroad and the other at home, but in this respect the exigencies of military service soon produced modifications.

Reverting to the Enlistment Act of 1870, we find an immense change indicated in the contract between the sovereign and the soldier, Mr Cardwell's idea being to secure a class of recruits altogether different from that which had previously entered the service. He was anxious, he said, to get hold of "the young man who is reluctant to spend all his life away, who may wish to contract marriage, but who would give a good deal for the advantage of training for a few years." With this idea in view, he laid it down that a recruit was not to engage for more than twelve years, and might engage to serve the whole time

with the colours and part in the reserve. "We may expect to see," he said, "many young men passing through the army, learning trades in it, and afterwards returning to civil life to be ornaments and advantages to those around them, and at the same time to be ready to contribute to the defence of the country in case of emergency."

That Mr Cardwell's roseate anticipations have been fulfilled it would be idle to suggest. But there is no question that he made the first steps towards an entirely new and rational system, the development of which in later years has afforded a distinct hope that, eventually, we may arrive at something like Cardwellian ideals. In any case there is no question that short service, so far as the Home Army is concerned, has been abundantly justified. As for the Reserve, it must also be added that the manner in which it has, when called out on successive emergencies, responded to the call, has been inspiring to the last degree. It was not to be expected that any one Minister could entirely change the current of our idea of military administration and organisation, but Mr Cardwell certainly did more than any other War Secretary has done to produce improvements of a thoroughly practical and enduring kind, which are not only adapted to fulfil the national, and to some extent our imperial, requirements, but are largely in keeping with the national character.

In 1881, Mr Cardwell's Brigade Sub-districts, in which the infantry regiments of the Line were linked in pairs, were converted into the present Territorial Regiments. The abolition of the old numbers, and the substitution for them of county

titles, gave rise to sharp dissatisfaction at the time, but the county feeling engendered has proved really valuable, and its genuineness and depth have been finely illustrated by the liberality displayed by the various counties towards their respective corps in connection with gifts and other gracious aids during the South African war.

# SECTION V.

## CHAPTER I.

### INTERMITTENT WARFARE.

It has been said of the Victorian era that one of its most prominent features was the continuity of fighting throughout it; and it is certainly remarkable that, under such a pre-eminently peaceful Sovereign, the British Army in one part of the world or another, should have been so constantly employed on active service. Already various Indian campaigns prior to the Mutiny have been enumerated, which, together with the Mutiny itself and the war in the Crimea, must be regarded as belonging to this epoch. It now becomes necessary to glance at an even fuller record of warfare, in which not only India, but Persia, China, New Zealand, Abyssinia, Canada, Ashanti, and finally Egypt, the Soudan, and South Africa, afford material for a much more copious and stirring battle history than it is possible for the present writer to produce in the limited space now left to him.

Chronologically, the Persian campaign and part of the trouble with China come before the Indian Mutiny, but the latter trod so closely on the heels of the war in the Crimea, and yet required such distinct, even if perfunctory, treatment, that it seemed desirable to relegate both

Persia and China to the present chapter. As regards the former, there is little to say. By a treaty made in 1853 the Shah of Persia had engaged not to meddle with Herat, but the treaty had been violated, and, Herat having been occupied by the Persians, the East India Company in December 1856 declared war against the Shah, and despatched an expedition, which was placed under the command of General Outram, to bring him to reason. By the end of March 1857 this object had been accomplished, the Persians had had a beating, and Outram, with whom was Havelock, was summoned back to India to take a prominent part in the suppression of the Sepoy Revolt.

Our trouble with China commenced in 1856 in connection with the seizure by the Chinese of the lorcha *Arrow*, but the resultant military operations were trivial, the main interest of the proceedings being centred in the work of the fleet which bombarded Canton. After a suspension of the operations owing to the Mutiny, England obtained the co-operation of France, and, the Allies having captured Canton, a treaty with China was signed at Tien-tsin, a clause in which provided for an exchange of ratifications at Pekin within a year. When, however, in June 1859 the British and French envoys, escorted by a British fleet, attempted to get to Pekin for this purpose, they found the Peiho barricaded. The fleet tried to force a passage, and the Taku forts opened fire and disabled several of our ships. A landing party tried to storm the forts but failed, and, in point of fact, a very mortifying and rather

serious reverse was suffered. The next year a combined English and French expedition made its way to Pekin, the British troops, which included several native Indian regiments, being led by Sir Hope Grant. A murderous act of treachery committed by the Chinese during the negotiations led to the destruction of the Summer Palace at Peking.

Our more recent troubles with China arose out of the Boxer Rebellion of 1899, which culminated in the siege of the Foreign Legations at Peking by the Boxers, who pressed the investment so closely that at one time all hope was lost at home of effecting a relief. Eventually, however, an allied army, including not only a British force under Sir Alfred Gaselee, a general of high Indian reputation, but also German, French, Russian, Japanese and other contingents, forced its way to the Chinese capital and raised the siege. The splendid defence of the Legations is a very bright spot upon the history of our dealings with China, the chief credit being undoubtedly due to the British Minister, Sir Claude Macdonald, who had previously held a commission in the Army, and who conducted the defence with extraordinary calmness and ability. The operations of the Allies against the Boxers were subsequently placed under the control of the German Field-Marshal, Count Von Waldersee, and resulted in a more or less satisfactory composition. The trouble generally has had a variety of important results, of which the most important, so far as we are concerned, has been the conclusion of what is virtually an alliance with Japan,

and a profound conviction on the part of the Indian troops, which formed the bulk of our contingent, that the foreign European soldiers with whom they came in close contact did not compare at all favourably with their own British comrades.

In 1863 we commenced a series of operations in New Zealand against the Maoris, who had risen in rebellion owing to disputes between the Colonists and themselves as to the possession of the native lands. The Maoris gave us a deal of trouble, being a thoroughly warlike and highly intelligent race, and in April 1864 we were badly repulsed in endeavouring to capture one of their palisado-fortified villages called Gate Pah. The operations, consisting largely of actions in front of these "pahs," produced some notable instances of British gallantry, to which the records of the Victoria Cross bear witness, and lasted until 1869. The latter-day condition of the Maoris has been much more peaceful, and quite recently they have exhibited the most fervent loyalty in connection with the Prince of Wales's visit to New Zealand, and strong Imperialistic sentiments in regard to the South African War, in which they were most anxious to be allowed to fight for us.

King Theodore of Abyssinia having imprisoned a number of European residents in his country, among them several British subjects, was in 1867 called heavily to account, a British expedition being despatched from Bombay under Sir Robert Napier, afterwards Lord Napier of Magdala, which completely accomplished its purpose,

though at the very considerable cost of nine millions of money. The difficulties, especially of transport, were enormous, but Napier successfully surmounted them all, and, arriving before the rocky stronghold of Magdala at the beginning of April 1868, carried it by assault, only to find the dead body of Theodore, who had destroyed himself, inside the walls, a striking parallel to the finding of Tippoo Sultan's corpse at the gate of Seringapatam.

In 1866 a spasm of military excitement was created by the attempt of the Fenians in America to invade Canada. This was frustrated, partly by the vigorous action of the United States in enforcing the neutrality of their frontier lines, and partly by the promptitude with which the Canadian authorities hurried up reinforcements, and dealt with such of the invaders as had already crossed the Niagara river and occupied Fort Erie. Three years later there was fresh trouble in what is now part of Canada, but which was then in course of transference from the Hudson Bay Company to the Dominion. The inhabitants of the Red River District, which is now called Manitoba, objected to the transference, rose in rebellion under Louis Riel, and seized Fort Garry. An expedition was despatched up the Red River under Colonel, afterwards Lord Wolseley, and on its arrival the rebellion collapsed, the insurgents submitting without resistance.

In 1873 Sir Garnet Wolseley was called upon to carry out an undertaking which was much more difficult than the bloodless Red River Expedition, and his successful conduct of this

set a seal of distinction on a career that had already included much useful service in Burma, the Crimea, India and China, as well as in Canada. The Ashantis, a warlike and turbulent tribe on the Gold Coast of Africa, had aforetime given us considerable trouble, notably in 1824, when they were not subdued until after they had inflicted a serious reverse upon a British force; and again in 1863, when an expedition set on foot against them had to be abandoned owing to the mortality among even our West Indian troops from local fevers. In 1872 the King of Ashanti attacked a tribe under our protection, and in 1873 Sir Garnet Wolseley was despatched in command of a picked force, which fought its way to the Ashanti capital, Kumassi, in the teeth of serious obstacles, and compelled the King to come to terms. The battles of Ordahsu and Amoaful were included in a campaign which, from start to finish, lasted only about four months, and was carried out in very distressing conditions of climate and pestilence. The expedition was remarkable in bringing to early prominence a number of officers whose after careers were of unusual distinction, among them Generals Sir Evelyn Wood, Sir Redvers Buller, and Sir Henry Brackenbury.

The Ashantis have since brought upon themselves condign punishment on two further occasions. In 1895-6 an expedition under Sir Francis Scott effected a bloodless entry into Kumassi, the success of the operation being marred by the death from fever of Prince Henry of Battenberg, who had accompanied it as a volunteer. This

expedition did much towards opening up Ashanti; but disaffection subsequently arose among the tribesmen, by reason of our retention of the Golden Stool, the emblem of Ashanti sovereignty, and in 1899-1900 the Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Frederick Hodgson, was besieged in the Kumassi Residency by the Ashantis, and was only relieved with difficulty by a force under Sir James Willcocks.

The West Coast of Africa has had other disturbances than those created by the Ashantis, and various minor expeditions have been necessitated by the misconduct of other tribes, such as the Jebus and the Attabubus, and by risings on the Niger and in the Sierra Leone Protectorate. On the East Coast there has similarly been trouble in respect of Uganda and Somaliland, in the latter of which regions operations are, at the time of writing, still proceeding against the troublesome firebrand known as the Mad Mullah. To enter into details of these small campaigns would be outside the scope of the present work, but they demand attention if only by reason of the very important results which they have had in the matter of increasing and consolidating our Colonial Forces. West, East, and Central Africa have given us an infinity of anxiety, and involved us in an incalculable expenditure of blood and treasure; but, in addition to the vast territories added to the British Empire, they have produced notable fresh military organisations, such as the West African Regiment, which is under the War Office; the West African Frontier Force, which is controlled by the Colonial Office; and the King's

African Rifles, which is administered by the Foreign Office, and consists of two Central Africa, one East Africa, one Somaliland, and two Uganda battalions.

## CHAPTER II.

### EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN.

WHEN, in 1882, Arabi Pasha headed a rising with the object of getting rid of European influence in Egypt, the dual control of that country which had been established by Great Britain and France was so seriously menaced that immediate and drastic measures became necessary. France, to her subsequent regret, refused to act, but Great Britain rose finely to the occasion, and despatched both a fleet and an army, some 30,000 strong, to crush the insurrection. The fleet, under Sir Beauchamp Seymour, bombarded Alexandria, which was held by the insurgents, and shortly afterwards the army, under Sir Garnet, now Viscount, Wolseley, met and crushed Arabi's forces at Tel-el-Kebir. The campaign also included actions at Mahuta and Kassassin, and some fine cavalry work on the part of the division under Sir Drury Drury-Lowe, which, after Tel-el-Kebir, pressed on to, and occupied, Cairo. But the war, though admirably conducted, and containing many examples of dash and heroism, lost something of the glamour which would otherwise have surrounded it by reason of the poor resistance offered. The result was from the first a foregone conclusion, the preliminary intelligence

operations having produced ample information, while the arrangements for the overseas transport of the expedition were excellently carried out. But with a less skilful and experienced commander the campaign must have involved a much more serious expenditure of men and money, and the detailed record of it will always have an interest of its own for military students.

Tel-el-Kebir, where, on September 13, 1882, the Egyptian position, held by 19,000 Egyptians, was rushed at daybreak by a British force numbering 13,000, will always be a sort of "sealed pattern" of night attack. The troops were guided by a gallant young naval officer, who shaped his course by the stars, and was one of the first to fall when the attack was developed. There was some subsequent difference of opinion as to the part taken in the attack by the Second Division under Sir E. B. Hamley; but for the purposes of this story it is sufficient to say that the attack succeeded and that, while the British force lost 11 officers and 43 men killed and 22 officers and 320 men wounded, the Egyptians lost 1000 killed and wounded, 3000 surrendered, and the rest dispersed.

After the fall of Arabi the old Egyptian army was disbanded, and in 1883 a new army was set on foot with Sir Evelyn Wood as its first Sirdar or Commander-in-Chief. Meanwhile, in the Soudan a Mahomedan fanatic, calling himself the Mahdi, had instituted a vast revolt against the tyranny of the Egyptian officials, and had made such headway that, in 1883, Hicks Pasha was sent out against him with a hastily-collected

and rabble force of 11,000 Egyptians. This army was met and annihilated by the Mahdi near El Obeid, in Kordofan, in November, and on the same day an important success was obtained near Suakin by the Mahdi's lieutenant, Osman Digna, whose troops cut to pieces a force sent to relieve Tokar. A second Egyptian relieving force, under Valentine Baker Pasha, was destroyed on February 11, 1884, and Tokar fell into the hands of the enemy. The battle of El Teb (February 29) followed, at which Sir Gerald Graham, with 4000 British troops, defeated 12,000 Arabs; and a fortnight later a disaster was narrowly escaped at Tamai, when the British square was actually broken and only with difficulty re-formed.

In January 1884 General Charles Gordon, who had previously been Governor of the Soudan, was asked by the Government to return to Khartoum, and did so, arriving on February 18, 1884. Shortly afterwards Khartoum was closely invested by the Mahdists, and only by the most heroic efforts, coupled with every species of skilful ruse and expedient, was Gordon enabled to hold out against the besiegers month after month, until the end of the year brought him news of the approach of the British relieving force.

The story of the Nile Expedition of 1884-5 is that of one of the most splendid failures in the world's history. By dint of almost superhuman exertions nearly 14,000 British troops, under Lord Wolseley, pushed their way up the Nile in flat-bottomed boats, concentrating at Korti by Christ-

mas, 1884. From Korti, a force under Sir Herbert Stewart struck across the desert to Metemmeh, and was attacked by the Dervishes, as the followers of the Mahdi were now called, at Abu Klea (January 17), repulsing them there, and again at Gubat two days later. In the latter action the gallant Stewart was mortally wounded, and Sir Charles Wilson took command. A few days afterwards Wilson, with Lord Charles Beresford, made a splendid attempt to reach Khartoum in two river steamers, but arrived forty-eight hours too late. Khartoum had fallen. Gordon had been killed, and both Desert and River Column, the latter having meanwhile won another battle at Kirbekan, were withdrawn.

A brief campaign round Suakin followed, but all idea of a Suakin-Berber railway was knocked on the head by the action at McNeill's zariba on March 22, 1885, in which a force, under Sir John McNeill, was surprised, and only beat back the Dervishes with some difficulty.

The evacuation of Dongola followed in July, and on December 31 the Dervishes advanced to Giniss, where they were met by the British under General Stephenson, and the Egyptians under Grenfell, and beaten handsomely. In April 1886 all the British troops were withdrawn to Wady Halfa.

In April 1887, the Dervishes pressing down the valley of the Nile were defeated by Colonel Chermside at Sarras, and in December of the following year they suffered two fresh defeats near Suakin at Handoub and Gemaizah. In 1889 the Dervish Emir Nejumi was utterly routed

by Grenfell at Toski (August 17), and in 1891 Osman Digna was driven by Colonel Holled-Smith out of Tokar.

In 1896 the British Government determined to despatch an expedition up the Nile, partly with a view to creating a diversion in favour of the Italians, who were being besieged by the Dervishes at Kassala, and partly to establish a stronger barrier between Mahdism and Egypt than the Wady Halfa boundary. The result of this expedition, led by Sir H. H. Kitchener, who had succeeded Sir Francis Grenfell as Sirdar in 1892, was the re-capture of the province of Dongola, after the battles of Ferket (June 7), and Hafir (September 19).

During 1897 the lines of communication were strengthened, Abu Hamed was captured by General Hunter, and the Suakin-Berber route re-opened. Metemmeh, where there were 10,000 Dervishes under the Emir Mahmud, was reconnoitred, and Kassala was taken over from the Italians by an Egyptian garrison under Colonel Parsons.

Early in 1898 Kitchener entered upon the last stage of his victorious movement on Khartum. The Emir Mahmud having commenced an advance down the Nile, a British brigade under General Gatacre was concentrated at Wady Halfa, and subsequently moved to Berber, where it effected a junction with an Egyptian division under General Hunter. With this force, eight squadrons of Egyptian Cavalry, and four batteries of Artillery, the Sirdar, on April 8, found Mahmud's army, some 19,000 strong, on the Atbara,

and attacked it in zariba, completely shattering it and taking Mahmud himself prisoner.

Preparations were now made for a final advance. Fresh British troops were sent out, bringing the British force under the Sirdar up to a division of two brigades under the command of General Gatacre, with Lyttelton and Wauchope under him as Brigadiers. A concentration was effected at Wad Hamed, and towards the end of August the final stage of the advance commenced, the troops being supported by a flotilla of gun-boats under Commander Keppel, R.N., while the cavalry under Colonel Broadwood pushed ahead.

On Friday, September 2, the Sirdar's force was in zariba before Omdurman, the capital of the Khalifa Abdullah, who had succeeded the Mahdi on the latter's decease in 1885, and had built up on Mahdism a hideous superstructure of tyranny and every other sort of abomination. The forces at the Khalifa's disposal amounted to about 45,000, as against Kitchener's 25,000. In the early morning of September 2 the bulk of the Dervishes was hurled against the Sirdar's zariba, only to be repelled by the splendid fire discipline of the British troops. The Khalifa having retired to reorganise his shattered forces the Sirdar ordered an advance, when a second tremendous attack was delivered by the Dervishes on the Sirdar's right, where, for a time, the Soudanese brigade was in a critical position. Their leader, Colonel, now Sir Hector, Macdonald, sustained the attack with splendid coolness and skill, and with the help of Lyttelton's (British) and Max-

well's (Soudanese) brigades the crisis was averted. By nine o'clock the battle was practically won, and the Sirdar, wishing to cut off the fugitives from Omdurman, sent forward his cavalry, which included a single British regiment, the 21st Lancers under Colonel Martin. The Lancers approaching a depression in which it was supposed about 200 Dervishes were concealed, charged, only to find themselves opposed by at least 2000 desperate men. There was no time for hesitation, and the regiment dashed on, cutting its way completely through the enemy, and then carried out its orders by dismounting, and with carbines heading the enemy off from Omdurman.

Omdurman was forthwith entered, and although several further blows, notably the battle of Gedaref won by Colonel Parsons, had yet to be inflicted before the reconquest of the Soudan could be called complete, a decisive blow had been dealt to the Dervish tyranny, and the fate of Gordon amply avenged.

## CHAPTER III.

### LATTER-DAY INDIA.

THE military history of India since the Mutiny is doubly interesting by reason of the many important changes and improvements and increases which have taken place in the Indian Army, concomitantly with a pretty continuous record of

fighting, often of a very severe character indeed. Space renders it impossible to do justice to these developments, but attention must be drawn to the fact that, since the Mutiny, the Native Army of India has not only altered greatly in character but has acquired a strength, a solidarity, an efficiency, and a readiness for action, which are admitted and admired throughout the civilised world. The last great reorganisation of the Army was effected in 1895, and resulted in the substitution for the old Presidency Armies of four great Army commands, the Punjab, Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, the troops in Burma being included in the last named. Many other changes have taken place, notably in the direction of recruiting more exclusively from the fighting classes, with the result that the Indian Army was able to send to the Coronation of King Edward VII. a representative contingent. the superb quality of which, as well as the variety of races in it, constituted one of the most impressive features of the event.

Another epoch-making circumstance in the latter-day history of the Indian Army has been the adaptation to Imperial purposes of the forces kept up by independent native rulers. Formerly the so-called "armies" of Native States were an undisciplined rabble which in time of disturbance would have constituted a grave source of disaffection and danger. Within the last fifteen years advantage has been taken of the eager loyalty of the native rulers to transform these objectionable "armies" into what are known as "Imperial Service Troops" which are trained by

British officers, and are available for imperial purposes in an emergency, but which, in time of peace, remain under native officers at the absolute disposal and under the complete control of the native prince by whom they are maintained. Already these troops have done good service on the Frontier and in China. A still more recent development in the direction of utilising the military ardour of the independent native chiefs and nobles, is the institution of the Imperial Cadet Corps which provides for the military training on British lines of a limited number of young princes and high-born native gentlemen, with a view to their possible employment as staff-officers, and in other suitable military capacities, should they desire to become permanently attached to the Indian Army.

Turning to the tale of campaigns which have occupied the attention of the Indian Army since the Mutiny, of several of these only the barest mention can be made, although they produced among them some notable fighting, and many inspiring instances of fine leadership and personal gallantry. Of such "little wars" the Sitana Expedition of 1858, the Waziri Expedition of 1859-60, the Umbeyla Campaign of 1863, the Bhutan Expedition of 1865-6, and the operations against the Hazaras (1868), the Lushais (1871-2), and the Jowakis (1877-8), were typical examples. In two of these, the Waziri and Umbeyla Campaigns, the command was held by one of the very finest and bravest soldiers the Indian Army has ever produced—and that is saying a very great deal—the late Sir Neville Chamberlain,

who afterwards rose to the rank of Field-Marshal, and died in 1902.

In 1878 a war of much greater magnitude had its origin in the discovery that Shere Ali, the Amir of Afghanistan, was favouring Russian intrigues. A British envoy who had started from Peshawar was turned back by Shere Ali, and a declaration of war followed, the British forces advancing in three columns through the Khyber, Kurrum, and Bolan Passes. The Afghans were defeated at Ali Musjid in the Khyber, at the Peiwar Kotal in the Kurrum, and at Kandahar, and Shere Ali fled to Turkestan, where he died in 1879. In May 1879 a treaty was signed with Shere Ali's son, Yakub Khan, at Gundamuk, one provision of which was that a British officer should be admitted to reside at Kabul. The following September the new British resident, Sir Louis Cavagnari, was, with his escort, treacherously attacked and murdered, thus rendering fresh operations necessary.

Immediately on the receipt of the news of Cavagnari's murder Sir Frederick Roberts marched with a small force over the Shutargardan Pass, and on October 6, defeated the mutinous Afghan troops at Charasiah, six miles from Kabul. The latter fell into our hands but Roberts spared it, and encamped his force in the neighbouring Sherpur cantonments. Here the little British army was soon surrounded by hostile Afghans, and sustained a siege until the end of December, when a relieving Brigade under command of General Charles Gough came up, and the enclosing Afghan forces disappeared.

In April 1880 General Sir Donald Stewart, who in the first phase of the war had commanded the Southern Field Force and captured Kandahar, was ordered to march on Kabul *via* Ghazni, by way of making such a display of strength as would overawe disaffection. Stewart carried out this duty with great skill, inflicting severe defeats on the Afghans at Ahmed Khel and Urzoo. On arrival at Kabul he took over command from Sir Frederick Roberts. In June 1880 Ayub Khan, the brother of Yakub, who had been sent to India after Charasiah, seriously defeated General Burrows at Maiwand. To wipe out this disaster a force of 10,000 men was immediately despatched from Kabul under Sir Frederick Roberts — Sir Donald Stewart generously waiving his seniority and placing his best troops at his junior's disposal—which in 20 days marched 303 miles, and then completely smashed the forces of Ayub Khan at Kandahar on September 1. This ended, so far as we were concerned, the war in Afghanistan, from which our troops retired, leaving Abdur Rahman as the recognised Amir.

Since the Afghan war there have been numerous expeditions against the Frontier tribes, such as the Hazara, Isazai, Miranzai, Manipur, and Chin-Lushai Expeditions, but the three most serious sets of operations have been those connected with the annexation of Upper Burma, the relief of the Chitral Residency, and the great Frontier Risings of 1897-8.

Towards the end of 1885 the misbehaviour of Theebaw, King of Upper Burma, rendered it necessary to send an army against him, and

accordingly a force under General Prendergast advanced and captured Mandalay without difficulty. Upper Burma was annexed on January 1, 1886, but a very considerable period elapsed before anything like general pacification could be accomplished. The Burmese, under rebel leaders called Bohs, gave a great deal of trouble to the parties sent to chase them through the dense jungles, and numbers of British officers were picked off at the head of their men in the course of this lengthy and trying campaign. After the capture of Mandalay the Upper Burma Field Force was commanded by General, afterwards Sir George, White, who conducted the operations with great skill and patience until they were brought to a satisfactory conclusion in 1889.

In 1895 an expedition on a considerable scale was sent to the relief of Chitral Fort, in which an adventurer named Umra Khan had surrounded the British Resident and a small escort of Sikhs. The main relieving force was concentrated at Peshawar under Sir R. C. Low, and advanced through the Malakand Pass and the Swat Valley across the Panjkora River, meeting with considerable opposition from the local warlike and fanatical tribes. The difficult Lowarai Pass was successfully negotiated, and the expedition was pushing forward in full confidence of effecting its object when it transpired that the actual relief of the beleaguered garrison had already been accomplished. A small mixed force under Colonel Kelly of the Indian Staff Corps had made its way round from Gilgit, and on its approach the besiegers, alarmed moreover by

the swift advance of Sir R. Low, melted away.

In 1897 a rising of the tribes along the Frontier occurred which, but for the brilliant generalship of men like Sir William Lockhart and Sir Bindon Blood, might have had far-reaching and tremendous results. It commenced with an attack, inspired by the preaching of fanatic *mullahs*, on the British camp at Malakand. This was followed by a succession of risings until the whole Frontier was ablaze, and even the Khyber Pass was closed by the hostile action of the Afridis. Separate campaigns were undertaken against the Mamunds, Mohmunds, and Bunerwals, and gradually a semblance of order was restored, except in the case of the great Afridi tribe, the members of which had retired into the remote district of Tirah, hitherto a sealed country to Europeans, and regarded by the Afridis themselves as impregnable.

In the autumn of 1897 a powerful expedition, including some 25,000 fighting men, was despatched under Sir William Lockhart to bring the Afridis finally to their senses. Lockhart advanced into the heart of the Afridi country, having successfully stormed the Arhanga and Sempagha Passes, and completely subjugated one of the most troublesome enemies we have ever had to deal with. An Afridi "settlement" was subsequently arrived at, with the result that not only is the Khyber Pass effectively guarded by a new force of Afridi Militia, but the Afridis are being admitted in increasing numbers to military service in the native regular army.

These Frontier risings have taught us some disagreeable lessons, among which must be reckoned the discovery that the Pathan armed with a good modern rifle, which he has been taught to use by fellow-tribesmen who have served under us, is a very different enemy from the Borderland fanatic of twenty or thirty years back. On the other hand, if the trouble in the Swat Valley, in Buner, and Tirah cost us dear, it gave us valuable opportunities of surveying districts hitherto unexplored, with the result that future expeditions, if necessary, will be able to "touch the spot" without having to feel their way, and perhaps to lose heavily, in time and men, by the process.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SOUTH AFRICA.

THE connection of the British Army with South Africa, a very brief account of which will form the subject of this chapter, may be said to date from 1810, when Cape Town surrendered to an English expedition under General Baird. Into the early history of the British settlement it is impossible to enter here, but it may be recorded that in 1811-12 began our troubles with the Kaffirs, who entered the neutral ground between the Fish and Sunday Rivers and were driven back, a line of military posts being established, with headquarters at Grahamstown. In 1819 another Kaffir incursion took place, and was only repulsed with difficulty.

In 1834 occurred a third Kaffir war, 12,000 armed natives invading Cape Colony, from which they were not expelled till March of the following year. From 1836-40 the Great Trek of the Dutch from Cape Colony was carried out, and in 1839 the British garrison of Natal was withdrawn. Military occupation was resumed in 1842, and in 1856 Natal became a separate colony. Meanwhile, the Zulus, Matabele and Basutos had risen to considerable power, the Zulus especially having consolidated under Chaka a military organisation which was destined to cause our Army a great deal of trouble and some humiliation.

In 1846 there was another Kaffir war, at the close of which an extension of the boundaries of Cape Colony was proclaimed, and the separate province of British Kaffraria established under military rule. In 1848 British authority was further proclaimed over the communities between the Orange and Vaal Rivers, and Boer malcontents were sharply defeated by Sir Harry Smith at Boomplats. In 1850-3 there were fresh Kaffir troubles, and in the latter year the Orange River Sovereignty was abandoned. In 1852 the independence of the Transvaal emigrants was recognised by the Sand River Convention. For the next twenty-five years the history of South Africa is a tangle of difficulties between Boers and Basutos, complicated by questions as to the ownership of Delagoa Bay and by discoveries of gold and diamonds, which have no connection with this story.

In 1877 the Transvaal was annexed to Great Britain, the annexation being carried out by Sir

Theophilus Shepstone with an "armed force" consisting of only twenty-five Natal Mounted Police. In the following year it became evident that Kaffirdom was in a very unsettled state, and grave fears were entertained respecting Cetewayo, King of the Zulus, whose powerful army was known to be excited by the successes which the Basutos under Sekukuni had obtained over the late Boer Government of the Transvaal. In December 1878, Sir Bartle Frere, Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner for South Africa, sent Cetewayo an ultimatum, requiring among other things a reform of the Zulu military system, and, no reply having been received, Lord Chelmsford, in January 1879, crossed the Tugela into Zululand with a force in four divisions, the idea being to converge on the King's Kraal at Ulundi.

On January 22, four companies of the 24th Regiment with a native contingent were attacked in camp at Isandhlwana, on the left bank of the Buffalo River, by an overwhelming Zulu force, and, practically speaking, annihilated, the British loss being over 800. On the same night the Zulus attacked Rorke's Drift, a station on the Tugela, where a hospital and some commissariat stores had been left in charge of Lieutenants Chard, R.E., and Bromhead, 24th Regiment. These two young officers, hearing from refugees of the disaster at Isandhlwana, hastily constructed a rampart of rice bags and biscuit boxes, and when the Zulus arrived they with eighty men of the 24th Regiment kept the enemy at bay all night. Six times the Zulus got inside but were turned out at the point of the bayonet. They

withdrew at dawn leaving 350 dead, the British loss being 17 killed and 10 wounded. In all our military annals there is no more inspiring incident than the defence of Rorke's Drift, which has been happily commemorated in a well-known picture.

After a harassing set of operations, including the shutting up of a force under Colonel Pearson in Etshowe and a reverse at Intombi River, the tide of fortune turned. Colonel, now Sir Evelyn, Wood, who had captured Hlobane, the stronghold of Cetewayo's lieutenant, Umbelini, but had suffered a reverse on the way back, completely routed a large body of Zulus at Kambula Kop, and on April 1 Lord Chelmsford inflicted a sharp defeat on another force of the enemy at Gingilhovo. On June 1 these successes were marred by the sad death of Prince Louis Napoleon, who had come to Zululand in company with reinforcements, and was killed when out with a reconnoitring party. On July 4 the Zulu power was finally crushed by Lord Chelmsford at the decisive victory of Ulundi, where 20,000 Zulus were engaged and 1000 killed. In November further operations were taken against Sekukuni, whose stronghold was captured by an expedition under Sir Baker Russell, the chief himself subsequently surrendering.

Meanwhile the Boers had been taking advantage of our pre-occupation to assert themselves very freely, and in December 1880 a declaration of Boer independence was made at Paardekraal. Hostilities were at once commenced and, after what was, practically speaking, the massacre of a

British detachment at Bronkhorst Spruit, the Boers invaded Natal and took up a position at Laing's Nek. Here they were attacked by Sir George Colley on January 28, 1881, with a mounted force and the 58th Regiment, the British being severely repulsed by 2000 Boers strongly posted behind rocks. On February 8, Colley was himself attacked on the Ingogo River, and, though he succeeded in driving off the enemy, suffered serious loss. On February 27 this miserable campaign culminated in poor Colley's defeat and death at Majuba Hill, which he had seized and occupied the previous day. Here he was attacked by the Boers, who, advancing under cover and shooting with deadly effect, gained the crest of the hill. A panic ensued among our men, and they rushed down the hill, followed by the Boers, after losing 92 killed and 134 wounded. Peace was subsequently arranged, and for nineteen long years the memory of Majuba Hill rankled in British bosoms as the saddest and sorest disgrace which the British Army had ever experienced.

In January 1885 a bloodless victory was secured by Sir Charles Warren in Bechuanaland where a number of filibusters were giving trouble, and two years later successful operations were undertaken against the Galekas who had invaded territory under our rule. In 1891 we had trouble with the Portuguese which resulted in a skirmish in which a body of the newly-formed South Africa Company's Police completely defeated a much larger Portuguese force. In 1893 the British South Africa Company declared war against the

Matabele and completely defeated them in several actions, but with the loss in December of a patrol under Major Allen Wilson, which was overpowered while in pursuit of the Matabele King, Lobengula.

In December 1895 the treatment of the Uitlanders by the Transvaal Government led to preparations for a Uitlander rising in Johannesburg and to an unsuccessful raid headed by Dr Jameson, who was defeated by the Boers and surrendered with all his force. From this moment the Boers commenced making elaborate warlike preparations with a view to trying conclusions with Great Britain when a favourable opportunity should arise.

In 1896 a serious rising took place in Matabeleland, to quell which it became necessary to send Imperial troops to assist the British South Africa Company's police and volunteers. A good deal of desultory fighting ensued, and it was not until 1897 that the revolt was finally suppressed.

In October 1899 commenced the great war in South Africa of which we have but recently seen the conclusion, and to which, accordingly, only very brief allusion will be made here. For the purposes of this story it is sufficient to say that, with the obvious intention of provoking hostilities, the Boers issued an "ultimatum" to Great Britain, the period fixed for compliance with which expired on October 11. A Boer invasion of Natal, partly checked by actions at Talana Hill and Elandslaagte, was followed by the isolation of Ladysmith, a similar fate having overtaken Kimberley and Mafeking. In a fruitless attempt

to relieve the former, Lord Methuen fought actions at Belmont, Enslin, Modder River, and Magersfontein, the latter (December 11) terminating in a British repulse with heavy loss. Sir Redvers Buller, in seeking to raise the siege of Ladysmith, suffered, on December 15, a serious reverse at Colenso. Previously, General Gatacre had, on December 10, made an attack on Stormberg, but had been himself surprised and beaten back. On the receipt at home of the news of these three disasters, Lord Roberts was appointed Commander-in-Chief in South Africa with Lord Kitchener as his Chief of the Staff.

On February 9th, 1900, Lord Roberts arrived at Modder River, and, leaving the rail, he immediately struck across country towards Bloemfontein. On February 15th French relieved Kimberley, and on February 28th Buller's fourth attempt to relieve Ladysmith proved successful. On March 13, Lord Roberts, having on February 27th, the anniversary of Majuba, received the surrender of Cronje at Paardeberg, entered Bloemfontein, the Boers retreating before his advance. Mafeking was relieved on May 17, and on June 5, Pretoria was occupied by the British forces. On September 6, Buller occupied Lydenburg; on October 25, the South African Republic was formally annexed; and, on November 29, Lord Roberts having started homewards, Lord Kitchener assumed supreme command.

The whole of 1901 and part of 1902 were occupied in a series of difficult operations against various Boer leaders, notably De Wet, who eluded with conspicuous skill every effort to capture him,

and himself made determined attempts to invade Cape Colony. Finally, by the institution of a system of long lines of blockhouses, between which he carried out immense "drives" of the enemy, Lord Kitchener wore down the Boer resistance, and a conference at Vereeniging was agreed to. Terms were arranged, and on May 31st the conditions of surrender were signed, thus bringing to a close a war in which the defects and the strength of the British military system were alike conspicuously exhibited. Our army learnt many lessons from the operations, and are likely to profit by them in the extended use of mounted infantry, in the avoidance of frontal attacks against a well-posted and straight shooting enemy, and in the better training of the soldier to use his individual intelligence. On the other hand, Great Britain's maritime power was well illustrated by her maintenance of such a large army over-seas, while the manner in which the colonies sprang to the assistance of the Empire by sending a succession of splendid contingents to the front has extorted the admiration and compelled the respect of the civilised world.

## CHAPTER V.

### TO-DAY.

HAVING traced the history of our army through a thousand years of work, mostly glorious, always arduous, and sometimes of a tragic intensity and

strenuousness, let us give a brief glance at the wonderful organisation which has thus been developed, and which is still in process of expansion and improvement. With figures we need not deal closely. All that can be attempted in the brief space left to the writer is a swift review of the more prominent features in our military hierarchy, with a passing allusion to details of the system in which changes are being, or, in the near future, are likely to be made.

At the head of our military system the Sovereign still stands, and, we may surely take it, will always stand, as the fountain-head of all military honour, the source from which the officer derives his commission, the object of the private soldier's loyal devotion, the personification of all that the Army holds in love and reverence. From the King downwards the government of the Army to some extent bifurcates into administration by the Secretary of State for War, and executive control by the Commander-in-Chief. But in practice the Secretary of State for War exercises a directing influence which is more or less marked according to the personality of the statesman who happens to hold the office. The Commander-in-Chief has under him six great Staff-officers: the Director-General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence, the Adjutant-General, the Quarter-Master-General, the Inspector-General of Fortifications, the Director-General of Ordnance, and the Director-General, Army Medical Service. These, with Staff-officers of lesser degree, constitute the Headquarters Staff of the Army, and deal with higher matters of Army organisation and ad-

ministration such as cannot be finally dealt with by Officers commanding Army Corps, or such as are the outcome of Headquarters initiative.

The Regular Army is now in course of organisation in Army Corps, of which there will ultimately be six, with Headquarters in Aldershot, on Salisbury Plain, in Ireland, and in London, Scotland, and York, respectively.

The British Regular Cavalry consists of three regiments of Household Cavalry, seven regiments of Dragoon Guards, three of Dragoons, six of Lancers, and twelve of Hussars.

The Regular Artillery includes 28 batteries Royal Horse Artillery, 151 batteries Royal Field Artillery, 10 Mountain batteries, and 105 Garrison companies.

The Royal Engineers comprise 68 companies (Fortress, Submarine Mining, Field, Depôt, Survey and Railway), a Bridging Battalion, a Telegraph Battalion, a Field Depôt, a Field Troop, 6 Balloon Sections and Depôt, and a Coast Battalion.

The British Regular Infantry consists of four Guards Regiments, sixty-nine Territorial Regiments (including the King's Royal Rifle Corps and the Rifle Brigade), a Royal Garrison Regiment and the West India Regiment.

Beside these there are Departmental Corps such as the Army Service, Royal Army Medical, Army Ordnance Corps, etc., and local corps, such as the West African Regiment.

The Yeomanry Cavalry has recently been reorganised into Imperial Yeomanry in Great Britain, as distinct from that which was organised for the special purposes of the South African

war. It consists of fifty-four regiments. The old constitutional force of England, the Militia, is being brought into more and more intimate association with the Line, and is justly valued as our most important reserve of military strength. The Militia did splendid service in connection with the South African war, not only by volunteering freely for the front, but also by garrisoning Mediterranean and other stations, and thus freeing Regular battalions. The Militia is now (1902) composed of 33 Artillery Corps, 11 Fortress Companies and 8 divisions Submarine Miners, R.E., 128 Infantry Battalions and 8 companies Medical Staff Corps.

Any but the barest allusion to our great Citizen Army, which, like the Yeomanry and Militia, took a notable part in the South African war, is out of the question here, more especially as, owing to new conditions of efficiency, the force may be regarded as in something resembling a state of transition. Recent returns have showed a total enrolled strength of about 230,000 Volunteers, but such figures would be trebled or quadrupled in any real emergency. On the other hand, increased stringency of conditions may be followed by a shrinkage, compensated, it is to be hoped, by harder and more uniform efficiency and more compact organisation.

Of the Regular Army detailed above a large section is required for service in India and the Colonies; but India, in addition, maintains a Native Army, numbering about 150,000, with strong auxiliaries in the shape of Volunteers, Military Police, and Imperial Service troops.

But the military strength of the British Empire does not end here by any means. Apart from the above organisations, and many others which it has not been possible to detail, the great Colonies also support local forces of magnificent quality, which in future are likely to be organised and trained with special reference to the use of portions of them in connection with Imperial emergencies. The contingents supplied by Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Ceylon for service in the late War—not to speak of the fine local corps raised in South Africa—have opened the eyes of the whole world to our Imperial resources in this direction. Statesmanlike encouragement, the application of uniform systems of training, and, above all, a clearer understanding on the part of both the Motherland and the Colonies as to their respective responsibilities in the matter of Imperial defence, should lead to a consolidation of those resources in the near future. In the meantime, the Colonies have demonstrated, in the most practical fashion possible, their willingness to lend assistance in a real emergency, and by doing so they have surely earned, not only the gratitude of the Motherland, but also a clear title to share in the traditions and glories of the British Army.

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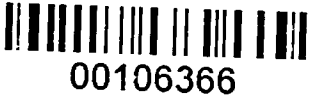


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